Hafa Adai!

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Senate legal counsel explains why Senate is right on bonus resolution. PAGE 3

AMP wants lawsuit of man who twisted his ankle dismissed. PAGE 5

$1

Over 2K WWII-era UXOs blown up

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The U.S Department of Defense, through its contracting company, HydroGeoLogic, Inc., collected over 2,000 unexploded ordnances, or UXOs, around the HOPE Recovery Center in the last four months, culminating in a huge, one-time disposal blast yesterday in Marpi.

According to Lt. Col. Eric Marshall, commander of the Honolulu District Corps of Engineers, the amount of UXOs found at the HOPE Recovery Center was a significant find for the size of the real estate.

"Within four months, we have found over 2,000 pieces of what we call MEC, or Mu-

See OVER on Page 4

HOPE Recovery Center reopens

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
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REPORTER

The Substance Abuse, Addiction, and Rehabilitation Program under the Office of the Governor reopened yesterday the *Hinemlu Ohala Para Enteramenti,* HOPE, Recovery Center after a four-month long relocation.

Members of the CNMI administration, including Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, Cabinet members, members of the CNMI Judiciary, and various government agencies joined HOPE Center staff yesterday at the ribbon cutting ceremony in Marpi.

The center, which had to close its doors for four months while the U.S Department of Defense came in to clear the area of unexploded ordnances, was created back in 2019 to help individuals plagued by addiction by providing them a safe, sober, and supportive environment to get clean.

According to Yvette R. Sablan, special assistant for Substance Abuse, Addiction, and Rehabilitation, it felt

See HOPE on Page 4

After the detonation of over 2,000 unexploded ordnances found at the HOPE Recovery Center, HOPE staff and members of the CNMI administration host a ribbon-cutting ceremony in celebration of the reopening of the recovery center. KIMBERLY B. ESMORES

Santos declines appointment to Impeachment Committee

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Santos

Sen. Teresita A. Santos (Ind-Rota) declined yesterday Senate President Jude U. Hofschneider's (R-Tinian) offer to appoint her a member of the Senate Special Committee on the Impeachment Hearing.

In a letter to Hofschneider, Santos thanked him for giving her the opportunity to serve as

See SANTOS on Page 4

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

LEGEND:
- **Red:** Least safe
- **Orange**
- **Yellow**
- **Blue**
- **Green:** Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

AT A GLANCE

As of 6:44pm, March 14, 2022

VACCINATIONS IN THE CNMI

Eligible Population Additional Dose Vaccinated:	58.2%
Days since last community transmission	4

Pfizer/BioNTech	
Initiated:	38,008
Fully Vaccinated:	37,214
Moderna	
Initiated:	5,345
Fully Vaccinated:	5,208
Janssen	
Fully vaccinated:	1,149
Additional Dose:	21,714

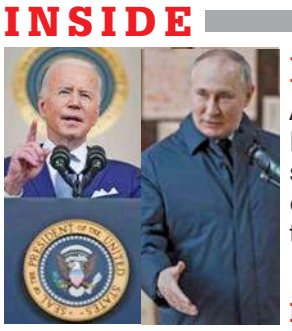
GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	46,331	80	46,411
Recovered	44,182	88	44,270
Active	1,723	80	1,803
Deaths	337	1	338

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	10,379	0*	10,379
Recovered	10,094	0*	10,094
Active	255	0*	255
Deaths	30	0*	30

*No update

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., https://www.vaccinatecnmi.com/vax-dashboard/

INSIDE



NATION
A rivalry with Russia. Nuclear brinksmanship. For many Americans, it's just like old times.

Page 12

WORLD
A pregnant woman and her baby have died after Russia bombed a maternity hospital.

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LIFE & STYLE
"Dune" won five prizes and "The Power of the Dog" was named best picture as the BAFTA.

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SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

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TAGA plus
sports business lifestyle
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https://tagaplus.saipantribune.com/

Local

Santos opposes increasing sanctuary to 57.5% of the CNMI's EEZ

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Sen. Teresita A. Santos (Ind-Rota) will not support the Marianas Trench National Marine Sanctuaries' nomination to remain in the inventory for another five years unless the size reverts back to its original size.

Santos, who co-chairs the Rota Legislative Delegation), said the people in the CNMI should be allowed to freely practice their tradition of their lands and ocean providing sustenance for their families.

"I will stand with my people and echo their concerns and contention to increasing the sanctuary to 57.5% of the CNMI's exclusive economic zone EEZ," said Santos in her letter to Kristina Kekuewa, who is the Pacific Islands regional director for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries.

The senator said cultural sensitivity and understanding are also vital and it is critical that the people of the CNMI be given equal co-management of any federally designated sanctuary.

Santos

"Since we are a small group of islands, we need to rely on our resources to help grow our economy," she said.

Santos said the CNMI EEZ is an important area of the sea in which the government has special rights regarding the exploration and use of marine resources, including energy production from water and wind.

She said increasing the size of the sanctuary will be detrimental and is not agreed upon in the original sanctuary.

More importantly, the senator said, the significantly larger sanctuary will be closed to free passage by Marianas residents, unless given special permission.

She underscored the need to strike a balance between traditional culture and practice with Western policies.

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP), House of Representatives Natural Resources chair Rep. Sheila J. Babauta (D-Saipan), and 500 Sails Inc. founder Emma Perez have expressed support for the five-year review of the proposed National Marine Sanctuary in the Mariana Islands.

In a joint comment submitted recently to Kekuewa, Sablan, Babauta, and Perez said they have reviewed the nomination and believe that the region continues to meet the criteria as a potential sanctuary.

"We ask that the proposed national marine sanctuary remain in the inventory," they said.

The Office of National Marine Sanctuaries of the NOAA has requested written comments to facilitate ONMS' five-year review of the nomination for the Mariana Trench National Marine Sanctuary at the five-year interval.

Babauta said so much "fake news" has been spreading about this step in the process and that it's very harmful and quite scary.

"Right now, NOAA is only asking whether or not we should keep it on the inventory. That's it," she said.

Babauta coordinated the Environmental Sustainability and Stewardship Stakeholders working group to address issues that impact the lands and waters of the CNMI.

Participants of the working group include members of the House committee, Executive Branch offices, local and national non-government organizations, federal agencies, local businesses, scientists, and concerned citizens.

REGIONAL SPELLING BEE CHAMPION
The 18th CNMI Youth Congress congratulates Ana Guadalupe Villagomez of Grace Christian Academy Saipan, 2022 Scripps Regional Spelling Bee Champion. We wish you all the best as you represent our region at the national Spelling Bee in Washington, D.C.
CNMI YOUTH CONGRESS FACEBOOK PAGE
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Ana Guadalupe
Grace Christian Academy
CHAMPION

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

LANDLORD BRIEFING ANNOUNCEMENT
To All Interested Individuals, Real Estate Companies, & Landlords...
YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN US!

For the interested Landlords who are unable to attend in person and would like to attend the briefing virtually, please send a request via email to Sweet Lisua: slisua@nmhcgov.net or Rose Marie Fields: rfields@nmhcgov.net. You may also email the Housing Specialist to reserve a seat for you at the Western Lodge.

WHEN — MARCH 18, 2022 | 5:00PM TO 7:00PM
WHERE — TINIAN WESTERN LODGE CONFERENCE ROOM SAN JOSE, TINIAN
TOPICS INCLUDE — Benefits to becoming a Section 8 Landlord, Landlord Rights & Responsibilities, Housing Assistance Payment (HAP), Registration & many more...

For more information, please contact NMHC Tinian Fields Representative Frances Diaz and Assistant Janel Barcinas
at (670) 433-9213

Email: Frances Diaz - Tiniannmhc@nmhcgov.net
Janel Barcinas - TIQ@nmhcgov.mp
www.nhmcgov.net

Coast Guard cutters conclude Operation Aiga in Oceania

HONOLULU — The crews of the Coast Guard Cutters Juniper and Joseph Gerczak returned to Honolulu after completing a 42-day patrol in Oceania in support of Operation Aiga, March 7, 2022.

Both crews deployed on a combined 14,000-mile patrol to provide maritime support and patrol coverage for Samoa and American Samoa's exclusive economic zones as well as conducted joint-training operations with the Armed Forces in French Polynesia.

Operation "Aiga," the Samoan word for family, is designed to integrate Coast Guard capabilities and operations with Pacific Island County partners in order to effectively and efficiently protect shared international interests, combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, and strengthen maritime governance in Oceania.

"The Coast Guard remains committed to combating IUU fishing as fish stocks remain a critical component to maritime sovereignty and resource security for many nations, especially those in the Pacific," said Cmdr. Jeff Bryant, chief of enforcement for Coast Guard District Fourteen. "The Juniper and Joseph Gerczak were able to establish stability for our partners on the high seas and while patrolling their EEZs in support of Operation Aiga."

While underway, both cutters conducted hoist training with French Dauphin N3 helicopter crews designed to increase interoperability on the high seas. Additionally, both cutter commanding officers met with Rear Adm. Jean-Matthieu Rey, commander of Armed Forces in French Polynesia, in Tahiti to discuss the importance of regional maritime security partnerships to maintain a free and open Indo-Pacific.

"We had the privilege to integrate our capabilities and strengthen existing partnerships with the French, while protecting global resources on the high seas and exclusive economic zones of our regional partners," said Cmdr. Christopher Jasnoch, commanding officer of the Juniper. "I am extremely proud of the crew of Juniper for their hard work preparing for this patrol, resiliency in overcoming the challenges of COVID-19 and their dedication to protecting national interests in Oceania while modeling professional maritime behavior to our partners and competitors."

Additionally, the Juniper and Joseph Gerczak crews helped fill an operational presence, conducting security patrols in Samoa's EEZ throughout the month of February to protect fisheries and other natural resources while Samoa's Nafanua II patrol boat was down.

The Joseph Gerczak made an inaugural visit in Pape'ete, Tahiti, marking the first time a Coast Guard fast response cutter conducted vital port calls on the island.

"Although Coast Guard missions, new cutters, and adventure make serving afloat attractive, the top incentive remains having the opportunity to serve alongside the most talented and humble men and women our country has to offer," said Lt. Joseph Blinsky, commanding officer of the Joseph Gerczak. "Without the skill and hard work from Joseph Gerczak's crew, our more than 2,300 NM transit to Tahiti from Honolulu would not have been possible. Coupled with first-class support from District 14, Sector Honolulu, and Juniper, made executing this expeditionary patrol a reality."

The Juniper is a 225-foot seagoing buoy tender homeported in Honolulu and is responsible for maintaining aids to navigation, performing maritime law enforcement, port and coastal security, search and rescue, and environmental protection.

FRCs, like the Joseph Gerczak, are outfitted with advanced command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance equipment and are designed as multi-mission platforms ranging from maritime law enforcement to search and rescue. ***(PR)***

Senate legal counsel explains why Senate is right on bonus resolution

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

It is the legal opinion of Senate legal counsel Antonette Villagomez that the Senate has the authority to file Senate Joint Resolution 22-09 that approves Gov. Ralph DLG Torres' request to create a new program and business unit for the government retirees' $1,000 bonuses.

At a Senate session on Tinian Thursday, Villagomez cited Senate Joint Resolution 19-04 as precedent to support her opinion that the Senate does have authority to introduce a joint resolution entertaining the governor's request for reprogramming under 1 CMC Section 7204 (d).

Villagomez discussed her legal opinion at the request of Senate President Jude U. Hofschneider (R-Tinian) shortly before the Senate unanimously voted "yes" for the adoption of Senate Joint Resolution 22-09.

Hofschneider said that in December 2021, there was a question by some members of the Legislature that a joint resolution may be not permissible to originate from the Senate, because it has to be House of Representatives' joint resolution.

Hofschneider, who is the principal author of Senate Joint Resolution 22-09, said he based his current decisions on the guidance of their legal counsel. He said he asked Villagomez to discuss her legal opinion to allow the senators, and members in the community who watched the session on live stream, to understand what the exercise is all about, and how important it is for the Legislature to finally adopt the joint resolution.

Villagomez said that Hofschneider did ask for a legal opinion to answer the question whether or not the Senate is authorized to introduce a joint resolution to approve the request of the governor.

Villagomez said it is true that the House carries the purse of the CNMI government, that Article 2 Section 5 of the NMI Constitution is clear that appropriation and revenue bills may be introduced only in the House.

"That already happened when the House introduced the current fiscal year budget and passed it and the Senate also passed it and it became a law," she said.

Villagomez said Article 3, Section 9 of the NMI Constitution provides that if a balanced budget is approved by the Legislature, the governor may not reallocate appropriated funds except as provided by law.

"So the governor, once we have a budget, he cannot reprogram the funds—except as provided by law," she said.

That is provided in the Planning and Budgeting Act, which authorizes the governor to reprogram funds, she said. Villagomez said 1 CMC Section 7402, which is a section of the Planning and Budgeting Act, authorizes the government to reprogram up to 25% of the budget of the Executive Branch of any fiscal year.

"So once we have a budget, the governor can move around monies without the approval of the Legislature—up to 25% of the Executive Branch budget," she said.

The counsel said 1 CMC Section 7402 (d) authorizes other reprogramming so if the governor needs reprogramming that is not authorized by the 25% or in excess of the 25%, he can still make a request pursuant to that statute.

"That's the trigger here. And it says here that the governor may request the Legislature for authority to reprogram funds other than such reprogramming as authorized by Subsections a, b, and c," she said.

Villagomez said Subsection b is the 25% authorization for the governor, and c is the 10% reprogramming authority of the agencies.

She said if the governor doesn't fit into Subsections a, b, and c, he can make his request pursuant to Subsection d, which he did in this retirees' bonus case.

In his letter in mid-December that Torres transmitted to both chambers of the Legislature, he requested approval to create a new business unit for the retirees' bonuses and to authorize the reprogramming of funds within the Executive Branch to fund that business unit.

Villagomez said that based on Article 2 Section 9 of the NMI Constitution, and the Planning and Budgeting Act, 1 CMC Section 7402, that basically gives the governor that authority.

"Now the vehicle for the governor's request to reprogram shall be subject to approval by joint resolution. It doesn't say House joint resolution, it doesn't say Senate joint resolution," Villagomez pointed out.

Arguably, she said, the Senate can introduce a joint resolution, or the House can introduce a joint resolution to accommodate the governor's request.

The counsel noted that although it doesn't specify which joint resolution in the Planning and Budgeting Act, it does provide for a House concurrent resolution. Villagomez said the Act defines what is a House concurrent resolution and the definition clearly states that a joint resolution has to originate in the House.

Senate legal counsel Antonette Villagomez, fourth from left, reads some documents in this file photo. Also in the photo are Senate President Jude U. Hofschneider, right, Sen. Victor B. Hocog, third from left, and two Senate staff. FERDIE DE LA TORRE

"So in that case, it is clear the Senate can never introduce a House joint resolution because in the Planning and Budgeting Act, it clearly defines it as a House concurrent resolution that has to originate from the House," she said.

But in the case of reprogramming, she said, it just says joint resolution, so arguably, the Senate or the House may introduce it.

She said the introduction of Senate joint resolution was also based on the government's communication, the attorney general's advice, and

See SENATE on Page 4

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Palacios: Torres a strong candidate, but can't underestimate Sablan

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios said he can't underestimate either Gov. Ralph DLG Torres or Rep. Christina E. Sablan in this Nov. 8 gubernatorial election.

Palacios

When asked who he believes is his stronger opponent in the gubernatorial race Palacios said during an interview Friday that Torres is strong because of the Republican Party's organizational foundation. He said Sablan, who is the NMI Democratic Party's candidate for governor, has her strengths, too, so he and his running mate, Saipan Mayor David M. Apatang, are not taking anybody for granted.

"So we're staying close on our campaign and staying focused," Palacios said.

He said they are constantly working hard.

"We will give our best," said Palacios, who is a Republican but is running as an independent candidate.

Last Friday, Palacios and Apatang endorsed Ramon Blas "RB" Camacho's candidacy for Saipan mayor under their independent team.

Coral Ocean Resort Saipan is latest ProaPerks partner

NMC

Coral Ocean Resort Saipan is now a proud NMC ProaPerks partner. More information about their special promotion for ProaPerks card holders can be found at marianas.edu/proaperks.

Coral Ocean Resort Saipan is the latest company to sign on as a Northern Marianas College ProaPerks Partner, joining many other businesses and organizations. All card-carrying members of the NMC ProaPerks program can now receive:

An exclusive special room only rate of $149 (tax inclusive)

A 50% discount on the dinner menu (food only) with a room rate of $169.00 (tax inclusive) per night with a maximum capacity of 4 adults (no extra bed provided) for March – June 2022

A 5% discount for room stay from July 2022 to February 2023

Coral Ocean Resort, previously known as Coral Ocean Point, was reborn as Saipan's only beach club-style resort in January 2022, inspired by a theme of wellness. Contemporary casual dining experiences range from a wellness breakfast to sushi and seafood cuisine, enhanced by a "Sunday Bubble" Brunch.

The swimming pool, home to myriad picturesque photo zones, offers endless relaxation during the daytime. After sundown, enjoy stylish privacy in the young, trendy beach club ambience. It is a perfect getaway combination for young adventures.

Companies and other interested organizations who would like to become part of the ProaPerks program and take advantage of the buying power of thousands of individuals that include Northern Marianas College alumni, students, and employees, can find more information by emailing proaperks@marianas.edu. ***(NMC)***

HOPE

From Page 1

great to be back at the center after being relocated to the Gold Beach Hotel for four months.

"We're really pleased to be back. Being away from here, it was really quite challenging. While we were away, the difference really is the logistics. Being in the center of the island, we were just exposed to a lot of activity as opposed to up here. As you can tell coming in, it's just one way in, one way out and accessibility is not easy for folks that just want to come in and do something crazy. But down there, it was just quite challenging for the residents and for ourselves, the staff, as well," she said.

Sablan said she had her concerns before returning, like how the place would look when they returned, given that the whole area was excavated in search of unexploded ordnances, but, to their surprise, everything was put back together, thanks to HydroGeoLogic, Inc., the U.S DoD's contracting company.

"We couldn't wait to come back. We were just so excited. We were really looking forward to coming in but expecting that the grounds would be a mess, as we were told that there'll be a lot of digging. I've been here and seen that it was all just completely dug up, potholes everywhere. But we came back and realized how everything was really put back together," she said.

Currently, HOPE houses 16 individuals who are recovering from addiction.

In addition, HOPE has about 18 staff who help run the place and help care for the residents.

At the HOPE Center, services provided include individual therapy, group sessions, family education, and life skills. Individuals are also taught medication management, are provided employment and vocational training, and support to address overall crisis.

The goal at the HOPE Center is to ensure that residents can practice and improve their interpersonal and life skills, which supports their reintegration efforts.

OVER

From Page 1

nitions or Explosives of Concern. Not all that is necessarily explosive, but it's something that could be unsafe for the public. That is a significant find across 14 acres of land," he said.

Yesterday, HydroGeoLogic, in collaboration with the DoD, detonated the over 2,000 UXOs at the Marpi Blow Pit, a site in Marpi where many of the UXOs found in the CNMI are disposed of.

Some of the ordnances recovered at the HOPE Center were three-inch projectiles, 75mm projectiles, 90mm projectiles, 105mm projectiles, 155mm projectiles, 60mm mortars, 81mm mortars, and hundreds of hand grenades.

Marshall said the detonation was monumental because the site that was cleared of these ordnances used to be a defense site for the U.S. Army during World War II.

"Today we are we are detonating the final blast of UXOs that were found at the HOPE Clinic. The HOPE Clinic is an important site. The site, for us, is a Formerly Used Defense Site, which makes it a special piece of real estate for the Department of Defense. During the time that we used it, there were leftover unexploded ordnance. And we have gone through a four-month process of remediating that terrain as quick[ly] as we possibly could," he said.

In addition to the UXOs, HydroGeoLogic also uncovered over 76,000 pounds of metal that could be explosive or part of an explosive device that could contaminate the environment.

"It's not just explosives. It's also metal in the ground that's a contaminant. …We found over 76,000 pounds of metal within those 14 acres that have now been recovered and moved to recycle. So it's overall just a really good thing for the environment," he said.

Marshall said this is only the beginning of the DoD's mission to remove leftover UXOs from the CNMI environment that could pose a threat to the public.

"This is just the beginning. This mission is what we call a 'Time Critical Removal Action,' which is something we had to prioritize because there was really a concerning risk to the public. But we know that there's other land that needs to be remediated and this is just the start. Additionally, as part of the services we provide, we are going to continue to monitor to make sure that we've recovered everything, and to educate the public on explosives safety," he said.

Guam records 338th COVID-related death

Guam's Joint Information Center reported yesterday the island's 338th COVID-19-related fatality.

The JIC report stated that Guam's 338th COVID-19-related fatality occurred at the Guam Memorial Hospital on March 14, 2022. The patient was a 55-year-old male, partially vaccinated, with underlying health conditions and tested positive on Feb. 21.

"We are saddened to report another loved one lost to COVID-19. To his family and friends, [first gentleman] Jeff [Cook], [Lt. Gov.] Josh [Tenorio], and I extended our prayers and condolences in your time of grief," said Guam Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero. "Although we forge forward with hopeful hearts that recovery is on the horizon, we cannot let our guards down too quickly. Please get vaccinated and boosted and take advantage of free testing and treatment. These lifesaving tools have been gamechangers in our response." ***(Saipan Tribune)***

SANTOS

From Page 1

a member of the committee but "at this time respectfully declines the appointment." She did not explain why.

At a Senate session on Tinian Thursday, the Rota senator voted "yes" with reservation to the adoption of Senate Joint Resolution 22-09 that approves Gov. Ralph DLG Torres' request to create a new program and business unit for the government retirees' $1,000 bonuses.

At the same Thursday session, Hofschneider announced the formation of the Special Committee on the Impeachment Hearing and the appointment of senators to the committee. Sen. Karl R. King-Nabors (R-Tinian) was appointed chairman, Sen. Justo S. Quitugua (R-Saipan) as vice chairman, and Sens. Santos, Francisco Q. Cruz (R-Tinian), and Victor B. Hocog as members.

Sen. Paul A. Manglona (Ind-Rota) said yesterday that he is willing to be a member of the committee if appointed.

The committee will convene tomorrow, Wednesday, for a prehearing conference to set, among other deadlines, a date for when the impeachment hearing will start in the case against Torres.

House Resolution 22-14, which was introduced by Rep. Celina R. Babauta (D-Saipan), impeached Torres for alleged commission of felonies, corruption, and neglect of duty. Torres, who is the titular head of the NMI Republican Party, is seeking re-election this Nov. 8.

SENATE

From Page 3

the advice of the Settlement Fund's administrator.

Villagomez said that, based on the Constitution, the Planning and Budgeting Act, and the AG's advice to the Finance secretary and Torres, they proceeded to draft the Senate joint resolution and introduced it in the Senate.

She said the Senate had introduced Senate Joint Resolution 19-4 on Sept. 24, 2015, adopted the next day, and then the House went ahead and adopted the resolution.

The counsel said Senate Joint Resolution 19-04 authorized the government to reprogram funds in excess of the limits pursuant to 1 CMC Section 7402.

"So that again, 1 CMC 7402 only authorized 25%. The governor submitted a letter to the presiding officers requesting for approval to reprogram funds within its branch but in excess of 25%," she said.

Villagomez said it's not additional appropriation and not reprogramming from the Executive Branch or taking from any branch or any other business unit.

"It was just reprogramming in excess of 25% within the Executive Branch," she said.

AMP wants lawsuit dismissed

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
Kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The American Memorial Park has sought to dismiss the lawsuit filed against it by a man who alleged that the park was liable for his ankle injury.

In its response to the lawsuit filed by local business owner Yoon Suk Chang in the U.S. District Court for the NMI, the American Memorial Park, through assistant U.S. Attorney Mikel Schwab, denied liability and asked the District Court to dismiss the case altogether.

Schwab told the court that the lawsuit should be dismissed because the park is not liable for the acts or omissions of an independent individual. Also, Schwab said his client denies any liability for the injury sustained by Chang back in 2019 while at the park with his two sons.

Schwab argues that Chang's alleged injuries and/or damages were not proximately caused by the acts of the park's agents, servants, and employees.

"The plaintiff's alleged injuries and damages were caused solely and proximately by the acts or omissions of other parties, persons, or entities, or their servants, agents, representatives, and employees, none of whom are agencies or employees of the United States for whom the United States has any liability pursuant to the Federal Tort Claims Act," he said.

The lawyer also stated that the court has no jurisdiction over claims against actions by federal employees that are a matter of choice and guided by policies relating to access, historic and natural resource preservation, and conservation

According to Saipan Tribune archives, Chang is suing AMP in the amount of $1 million after he twisted his ankle while out at the park.

According to the lawsuit, back in Dec. 8, 2019, Chang and his two sons were at the park and were playing in the grassy area adjacent to the amphitheater when As Chang's younger son started to go toward the parking lot away from the grassy area. As Chang ran after him to stop him, he claims his foot was caught in a hole about a foot deep, causing him to fall violently to the ground and twisting his ankle.

Following the fall, Chang said he did not go to the hospital and instead applied ice on his ankle and took an aspirin. By Dec. 10, 2019, the plaintiff said the pain was too intense and he went to Brothers Oriental Medicine Clinic, where they recommended he get an X-ray.

The lawsuit said that throughout January 2020, the pain in Chang's ankle persisted and he visited the Commonwealth Health Center on numerous occasions and was ultimately referred to an orthopedic specialist on March 16, 2020.

A CHC doctor allegedly recommended that Chang have an MRI, but because of COVID-19, the hospital was unable to refer him to Guam.

With the pain persisting, Chang decided to go to Korea at the beginning of June for treatment. While in Korea, the doctors were able to diagnose the problem with an MRI. On July 7, 2020, the doctors in Korea performed surgery on him.

Chang has also been advised by the doctors in Korea that he may need additional surgery and perhaps an ankle replacement.

Meanwhile, due to the injury and his surgery, Chang said his construction business on Saipan had many projects left pending, causing him financial losses.

ATTENTION GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, EMPLOYERS, SELF-ADVOCATES
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DATE & TIME
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Tuesday, March 15, 2022, 8:00AM
Royal Taga Hall, Saipan World Resort
PROCLAMATION SIGNING
and RECOGNITION CEREMONY
Tuesday, March 15, 2022, 1:00PM
Wave Jungle Stage, Saipan World Resort
COMMUNITY OUTREACH FAIR
(OPEN TO THE PUBLIC)
Wednesday, March 16, 2022, 8:00AM
Royal Taga Hall, Saipan World Resort
Due to limited seating, pre-registration is required,
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For any questions or inquiries, please call the CNMI Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
at (670)322-6537/38/39 and we will communicate your inquiry to the appropriate agency.

MCS inducts 14 new National Honor Society members

Fourteen high school students were inducted into Mount Carmel School's Sacred Heart Chapter of the National Honor Society in a ceremony held on Friday, March 11, 2022, at Mount Carmel Cathedral.

The ceremony was led by Bishop Ryan P. Jimenez, school administrators, and society officers.

The inductees were selected by a faculty council that reviewed applications from sophomores and upperclassmen who had maintained a grade point average of 3.0 and had demonstrated how they had fulfilled the society's values of scholarship, service, leadership, and character.

This year's inductees are Natalie Gabrielle E. Ano, Erin Frink, Ruben Guerrero, Eunkyu (Joey) Hong, Brandon Lee, Jazmyn Phoeme Lopez, Devin Jordan Manglona Propst, Earle Gabreil San Nicolas, Jonathan Y. Sheu, Tyana Kisha Tesiro, Leyonne Alfred F. Tolentino, Avah Marie Torres, Kristan Rose Torres, and Jedric Nathaniel Villar.

The keynote speaker for the ceremony was AlumKnight Zeno Deleon Guerrero, otherwise known as "Mr. Z", who also serves as a recent faculty member teaching English and Literature.

In his speech, Deleon Guerrero spoke about the difference between how honor is typically perceived and what being honorable truly means.

"And so for you NHS inductees and current members, do not be guided by a GPA value or the number of clubs or leadership positions on your résumé. Be guided by treating yourself and others with the dignity and kindness you each deserve as human beings. Open your eyes, ears, and hearts to your MCS and Saipan community—we need you. Speak up and ask the tough questions. And by embracing that humanity within all of us, I am confident that you will bring honor to us all," he said.

MCS

Fourteen high school students were inducted into Mount Carmel School's Sacred Heart Chapter of the National Honor Society in a ceremony held on Friday, March 11, 2022, at Mount Carmel Cathedral.

In her opening remarks, acting MCS president Frances Taimanao thanked parents for supporting their children and congratulated the students for their accomplishments. She also reminded the new inductees that being in the NHS goes beyond academics and prestige. "NHS members not only excel in academics but also volunteer in their communities and make connections within the community a priority. …Ultimately, it's a symbol of your hard work. It's a place to make connections. And it's a launching pad for the next phase of your life. Congratulations to you, new members of the National Honor Society, and congratulations parents and guardians for always guiding and supporting them throughout their journey."

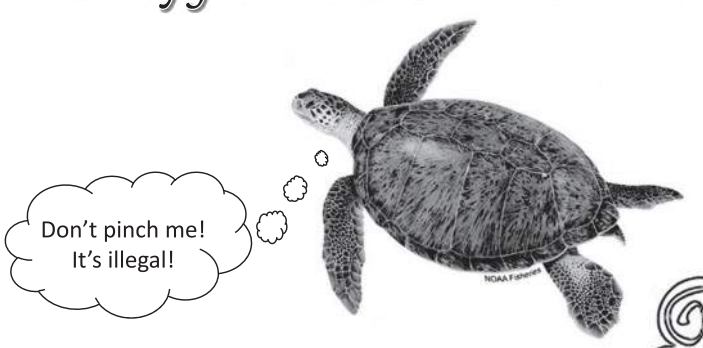
Established in 1921, the National Honor Society is the nation's premier organization that recognizes outstanding high school students, with more than one million student members who demonstrate the society's trademark values of scholarship, leadership, service, and character. Mount Carmel School's Sacred Heart Chapter of the NHS was opened in 1997. ***(PR)***

MARCH BAND CONCERT

MCS

Mount Carmel School's band program kicked off its performance season over the weekend with the March Band Concert at the Mount Carmel Cathedral on Saturday, March 12, 2022. During the concert, students from the school's Jazz Band, Concert Band, and Wind Orchestra performed a series of classical and contemporary musical numbers. The next band concert will be the Saipan Wind Band Festival on April 24, 2022, and will be streamed virtually. For more information, contact Mount Carmel School music director Julian Greening at julian.greening@mcsknights.com.

Happy St. Patrick's Day from the CNMI Sea Turtle Program



- *Green sea turtles are always wearing green because of their green diet of seaweeds and seagrasses.*
- *Their shells also harbor various types of green algae that they move around the ocean.*
- *With a little luck and a lot of your help we can restore our nesting green sea turtle population.*

We need your help to protect sea turtles!

Call our 24/7 hotline to report harassment, poaching, or strandings of sea turtles in the CNMI.
The number is **670-287-8537** and make sure to follow our Facebook page!

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
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Pursuant to P.L. 8-41, Section 11, Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lt. Governor Arnold I. Palacios, through the Health Care Professions Licensing Board (HCPLB) are hereby giving notice that it will hold its regular monthly board meeting on ***Wednesday, March 16, 2022, at 8am*** on Saipan. The meeting will be held at the Administration Building, Governor's Conference Room on Capitol Hill.

AGENDA

- **I.** Meeting Call to Order
- **II.** Determination of Quorum
- **III.** Review and Adoption of Agenda
- **IV.** Review and Adoption of Minutes (01/26/2022)
- **V.** Public Comments
  - Rep. Tina Sablan online via zoom
- **VI.** Chairperson's Report
  - **A.** Re-nomination of expired board members
    1. Theodore R. Parker
    2. Tiffany L. Willis
  - **B.** OPA Financial Statement Report due May 1st.
  - **C.** FSMB 2022 Annual Business Meeting – April 28-30, 2022.
- **VII.** Director's Report
  - **A.** Public Law 22-14 – Removal of Board terms
  - **B.** 2022 National Councils Meeting Schedules
- **VIII.** Investigator's Report
- **IX.** Communications from the Governor's Office & Legislature
  - **A.** Governor's Office
  - **B.** Legislature
    - HB-22-80: Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact (Request for public comments)
- **X.** Old Business
- **XI.** New Business
  - Cleaning up application forms and instructions.
  - Cleaning up application fees. Establishing electronic payment mechanism.
  - Finding background check company and payment system for same.
- **XII.** Pending Applications for Board's Review
  - **A.** New Application
  - **B.** Renewal Applications
- **XIII.** Miscellaneous Business
- **XIV.** Executive Session: The Board may vote to meet in executive session to consult with Counsel on pending or anticipated legal matters.
- **XV.** Announcements
  - **A.** Next Meeting Date
  - **B.** Adjournment of Meeting

Guam Fitbit users sought for study on predicting illnesses

University of Guam researchers are looking to ensure that residents of Pacific Islands and U.S. territories are represented in an ongoing national health study. The study, called DETECT, is investigating whether tracking heart rate, activity, and sleep through a wearable device can provide an early indication of influenza-like illnesses and possibly other viral infections, such as COVID-19.

DETECT is an app-based study run by the Scripps Translational Science Institute. It collects data from participants' wearable activity trackers and occasionally sends the wearer a short survey about their health status. It is then able to uncover patterns that may correlate with illness, ultimately improving the prediction and prevention of infectious disease.

The research project is an expanded effort of a similar study published in February 2020 that studied the data of Fitbit wearers in five states.

"Interestingly, this study collected data before COVID-19 and found that wearable devices significantly improved predictions of influenza-like illnesses," said UOG professor Yvette Paulino, a co-investigator on the DETECT study in Guam, who holds a doctorate in epidemiology.

UNIVERSITY OF GUAM

Christopher Mafnas, left, and Joseph Mafnas review the daily activity tracked by a Fitbit as part of the national DETECT study, an app-based study that analyzes participants' heart rate, activity, and sleep data to reveal patterns preceding influenza-like illnesses and possibly other viral infections, such as COVID-19.

Lead principal investigator Dr. Annette David, an adjunct research professor at UOG who holds a Doctor of Medicine and a Master of Public Health, said the six-month project involves recruiting Guam residents representing the diverse Asian, American, and Pacific Islander ethnicities that comprise the island's population.

"Our long-term goal is to develop a methodology that will allow individuals living across the Pacific—who in the past have had limited opportunities to participate in national research programs due to geographic barriers—an increased opportunity to choose to join trials," David said.

Ultimately, she said, they hope this recruitment effort will guide strategies moving forward to successfully recruit Pacific Island and territory residents to participate in more national studies.

The team is looking to recruit 1,000 people in Guam by July to be part of the study.

Also serving as co-investigator on the study is UOG professor emeritus Lilnabeth Somera, who holds a doctorate in communication.

Participate in the study

To participate in the study, residents can download the MyDataHelps app, available via Google Play and the Apple App Store, and input the project code: DETECT. Connect the app to a fitness tracker or smartwatch, and the device will do the rest.

Eligible participants must:

be 18 years of age or older

be a resident of Guam

have a smartphone or smartwatch fitness tracker

The first 50 people to join the study and recruit nine other people will receive a free Fitbit. To enter the recruitment promotion, send screenshots of the recruited profiles to detect.guam@gmail.com.

For more information about the study, contact the DETECT Guam team at detect.guam@gmail.com. ***(PR)***

Public warned of rough seas, rip currents

There is a high risk of dangerous rip currents on Tinian and Saipan through this morning, Tuesday, based on the information received from the National Weather Service in Guam and compiled at the CNMI Emergency Operations Center State Warning Point.

Also, a small craft advisory is in effect until 6am today.

Rip currents can sweep even the best swimmers away from shore into deeper water. The public is advised to stay out of the water along east facing reefs. Elsewhere, swim near a lifeguard. If caught in a rip current, relax and float. Don't swim against the current. If able, swim in a direction following the shoreline. If unable to escape, face the shore and call or wave for help.

East winds 15 to 25 knots with gusts of up to 30 knots and seas of 6 to 8 feet are present in Tinian and Saipan coastal waters until 6am today. These conditions will be hazardous to small craft. Inexperienced mariners, especially those operating smaller vessels, are advised to avoid navigating in hazardous conditions. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

Two UOG students selected for museum institute for indigenous Pacific Islanders

Two University of Guam students are embarking on a journey to become stewards of Micronesian history. It's a six-month training opportunity—specifically for indigenous Pacific Islanders—to learn how to care for and exhibit museum and cultural heritage collections.

The program—called "Weaving a Net(work) of Care for Oceanic Collections"—is a new institute hosted by the University of Hawaii at Mānoa's Department of American Studies, in partnership with the East-West Center, made possible by a 2021 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Selected by a peer-review panel to be part of the inaugural class of 20 students are Tyler Warwick, a senior in the UOG Anthropology Program, and Nicole DeLisle Dueñas, a graduate student in the Master of Arts in Micronesian Studies Program.

The cohort began the program virtually on Jan. 24.

The inaugural cohort of the University of Hawaii at Manoa and East-West Center's new museum institute during the first meeting in January of the six-month program.

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MANOA

Indigenous stewardship and ownership in museum work

The institute participants include students and early- to mid-career museum and cultural center workers and curators indigenous to Saipan, the Marshall Islands, Palau, Hawaii, Samoa, American Samoa, Kiribati, Fiji, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, and California.

"The enthusiasm has been overwhelming, but we are most excited by the selection of our cohort, which represents the depth and diversity of our Oceanic communities," said project director Noelle Kahanu.

Dueñas

Dueñas said the institute provides an important opportunity to connect with others in the Pacific toward the goal of centralizing indigenous knowledge in museum work.

"[Many] indigenous Pacific collections are associated with histories of colonization and the appropriation or recontextualization of our sacred cultural objects and ancestral remains," she said. "This program is important because it… brings people from Oceania together to determine ways museum work can shift from its colonial underpinnings to bringing indigenous stewardship and ownership back into the picture and into practice."

With an interest in indigenous histories and stories of the Mariana Islands, Dueñas has previously worked for the Guam Museum in educational programming and community outreach and has also worked with Humanities Guåhan on humanities-related cultural projects. She is presently writing her master's thesis on early colonial anthropology and archaeology in Guam.

Learning to care for artifacts that hold history

Warwick applied to the museum institute to learn skills to preserve cultural artifacts, create proper exhibits, and network with those doing similar work in the Pacific.

Warwick

"This [institute] is important because it allows us to learn the proper ways to protect and care for artifacts that are valuable and crucial pieces to our culture as they each hold a piece of our history," Warwick said.

Warwick is looking to put what he learns to use in his current apprenticeship with the Seafaring Traditions Program of the Commonwealth Council for Arts and Culture, where he is learning to build traditional canoes and a traditional canoe house in Saipan under the tutelage of John Castro and master canoe carver and navigator Antonio Urmeyang Piailug.

He added, "This institute will provide the necessary tools in learning the proper ways of working in a museum as well as bringing a connection between the cultural preservation of our artifacts and the living cultural heritage that exists in our community."

Warwick and Dueñas will be in the museum institute virtual until July, when they will join the rest of their cohort at the East-West Center in Honolulu for a four-week, in-person culmination of the program. ***(PR)***

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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EDITORIAL

Yes, condemn Putin's evil, but remember Russia wants freedom

Many of us in America feel a need now to somehow confront the Russian government and its strongman leader Vladimir Putin over the unjust and illegal invasion of Ukraine.

And we are gratified to see measures at every level of government do so, from serious economic sanctions leveled by the Biden administration to city-led resolutions to condemn the invasion.

We also applaud American companies that have withdrawn their business from Russia and sports organizations that have canceled games where athletes represent Russia.

It is absolutely crucial that Americans and the West stand united against this threat to human freedom and democracy.

We know, at the same time, that it can be hard to recognize where the line of condemnation ends. Just as we did throughout the Cold War, it is important to condemn the evil that Putin has visited upon Ukraine even as we remind Russians that they too deserve to be a free people.

Where to end the condemnation and open the embrace is sometimes hard to determine. The Van Cliburn International Piano Competition in Fort Worth, for example, recently announced that it will remain open to Russian pianists. The feelings right now over what is happening in Ukraine are so raw that many might conclude this was the wrong decision.

But we also understand the desire to welcome artists who likely have nothing whatsoever to do with their power-mad leader and who have worked their entire lives to bring beauty into the world through their instruments. And it's worth remembering that Van Cliburn himself was a symbol of the victory of individual artistry over the power of the Soviet state.

We pray for victory by Ukraine, even as we realize that hope is dimmer with each passing day. We are likely to awaken to a world divided once again between the West and a Russian power.

As we enter that time, we will need to negotiate these very questions many times over—how we both reject Russian aggression and open ourselves to the Russian people.

Our country's founders understood that freedom is inherent in the human soul, and we believe that the Russian people want freedom from the increasingly tyrannical government they live under.

Sending them the message that we support the full realization of their freedom will be just as important as condemning the darkness that is now spreading in Europe.

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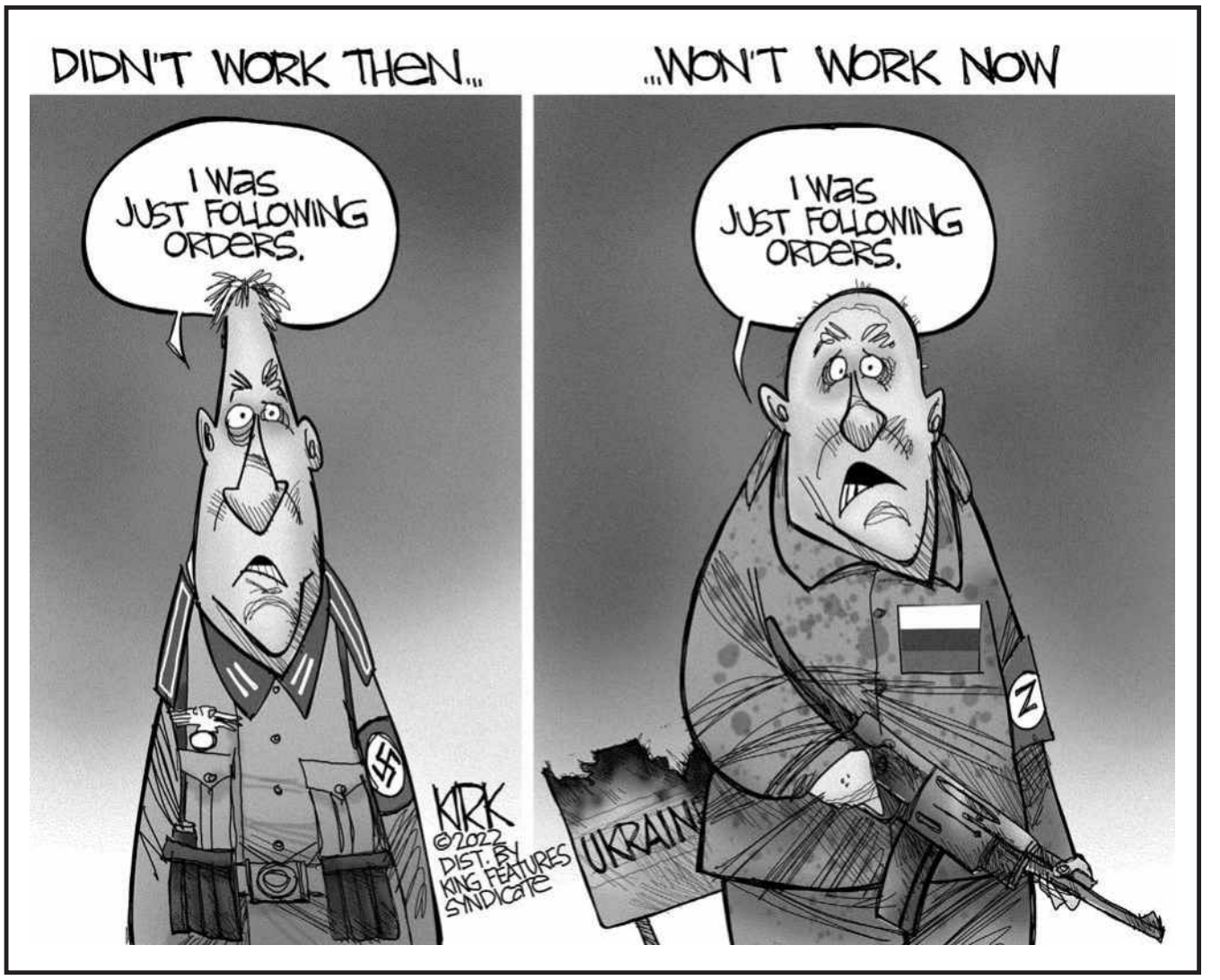


Why Biden isn't trying to sound like Churchill

By JONATHAN BERNSTEIN
Bloomberg Opinion

Jonathan Bernstein is a Bloomberg Opinion *columnist covering politics and policy. He taught political science at the University of Texas at San Antonio and DePauw University and wrote* A Plain Blog About Politics.

President Joe Biden's public statement Tuesday morning announcing a U.S. cutoff of Russian oil was an excellent example of how words matter when they come out of presidential mouths—and how multiple audiences complicate the presidency.

The most important audience Biden had to address was Russian President Vladimir Putin. Biden's goal before and after Russia invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24 has been to impress on Putin how seriously the U.S. and its allies take Putin's aggression and how severe the consequences will be—without doing anything that counts as entering the war. Everything that Biden says about this, including the fact that he says it himself (rather than, say, issuing a press release), begins with making that position as clear as possible.

Biden's next audience is Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. Biden's policy requires Zelenskyy and the Ukranians to keep fighting. That's delicate because Biden can't give them the kind of unqualified assistance that they want and that a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization would expect to receive.

And then there are NATO allies, other friendly nations, and, well, every other world leader, all of whom pay attention to what U.S. presidents say. In part that's because Biden is trying to keep intact a broad coalition opposing Putin. In part it's about Biden's general reputation for foreign policy expertise. At any rate, Biden's statement has to avoid angering those he can't afford to anger. It's not just about state actors, either; private companies and non-government actors will take their cues from what the president says.

Only after all of that can Biden worry about audiences at home—interest groups, business firms that may be affected by the handling of the war, and voters. To be sure, Tuesday's speech, scheduled for late morning, almost certainly wasn't aimed at directly at voters. But that doesn't mean that Americans won't hear sound bites from it, so it's important to avoid saying anything that could show up in a future attack ad.

I've been arguing that Biden's interest as far as electoral politics is concerned is to play down the Russia-Ukraine situation. Unfortunately for that goal, his foreign policy required him to play up the conflict before the invasion began. Then the State of the Union speech happened to fall last week, just after the war began, giving Biden no choice but to emphasize the conflict, which had the bonus advantage of giving him (or perhaps the Ukrainians, but he was the one standing there) several bipartisan ovations.

Still, Biden's primary message for voters remains reassuring them that the U.S. is not at war and will not go to war. At this point, Biden isn't asking citizens to do anything other than to tolerate the mainly economic costs of a sanctions policy he believes is best for the nation.

That gets us to skyrocketing gasoline prices. While Biden did provide Democratic politicians and operatives with a talking point: that it was "Putin's price hike," a point he repeated in brief remarks to the press later in the day. Biden did, as he said, "level with the American people" about the costs (or at least some of the costs) they will have to bear. Doing so is part of the president's representational responsibilities.

But the speech was in no sense one to rally citizens to sacrifice for a cause. Biden began with details of his sanctions policies, not with any argument about why any of it is necessary; he treated that as a something that was, at least at this point, self-evident. All of this is consistent with playing down the situation as best he can.

It's also consistent with the idea that any electoral effects of high gas prices will have a lot more to do with outcomes than with winning the spin war over it. Note that while pump prices did hit a new record in nominal dollars, inflation-adjusted prices are far from record territory, and energy as a percentage of consumer spending is still well below record levels. Republican hypocrisy on this topic has been getting a lot of attention recently, with Republicans accused of pushing for the cutoff of Russian oil that Biden announced on Tuesday and then bashing him for the inevitable result.

It's probably correct that neither Republican hype nor White House spin will change the basic fact that people don't like it when gas prices go up. But it's also generally true that voters care about the direction of economic change more than they care about levels, so if prices are headed down by fall it will probably blunt most electoral effects. Beyond that? Sure, it's worth it to try to brand inflation as Putin's fault, but it's unlikely that voters will care whose fault it is. If they're unhappy, they'll take it out on the incumbent president and his party.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Is Europe ready to handle Ukraine's growing refugee crisis?

By HANNE BEIRENS
Los Angeles Times

Hanne Beirens is director of Migration Policy Institute Europe, a nonpartisan think tank in Brussels.

BRUSSELS—Since Russia's invasion, more than 2 million people have fled Ukraine. An additional 4 million might not be far behind in what's shaping up as Europe's largest refugee crisis since World War II.

But is Europe ready to handle it?

The European Union and member states have shown a massive outpouring of support. Countries bordering Ukraine, including Poland, Hungary, Slovakia and Romania have rapidly erected reception centers, where tired and bedraggled arrivals are being warmly greeted with offers of food, clothing and shelter. Poland is also offering free use of mobile networks and public transportation for Ukrainians to join family and friends there or in other parts of Europe. Countries farther afield have similarly pledged support. The Belgian government, for example, is running a campaign to identify vacant public housing and find people willing to host Ukrainians.

The policy response has also been uncommonly fast and generous. Speaking in a unanimous voice that was unexpected—given the fractures of recent years among member states over refugees and migration—the European Council last Thursday in a first-ever move triggered the "Temporary Protection Directive." (It wasn't activated during the 2015-16 refugee crisis, which included people escaping Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan.) This measure offers protection for one year to those fleeing Ukraine. The protection status may be extended up to three years. This blanket designation means that countries won't have to assess asylum claims for each person.

Though this is a milestone for EU policy and spares national asylum systems from huge burdens, the action represents just the first lap. Policymakers in Brussels and other European capitals are understandably focused on the immediate provision of food, shelter and now legal status, but they need to also consider bigger near-term realities: Finding housing and providing access to jobs, education and healthcare for new arrivals.

The tasks are enormous, but if politicians activate the right levers, they can lessen some of the challenges and avoid the public perception that they are poorly managing or losing control of the situation—a widespread concern among governments on both sides of the Atlantic.

Here's what EU countries should do:

Establish a fast and smooth registration process, including identity and security checks. Refugees will be required to register with authorities in an EU country to access this newly available temporary protection status and related rights. Because the goal is to quickly provide protection, having Ukrainians queue up with other asylum-seekers would thwart that ambition. Instead, there should be specific registration offices set up for those fleeing Ukraine. A key lesson from Europe's 2015-16 crisis should be taken: These registration offices must be robustly staffed and the delivery of documents automated. Without a well-functioning registration system, Ukrainians will not be able to access the status and services essential to their integration. EU institutions, such as the border management agency Frontex and the EU Agency for Asylum, can also be major resources for countries that become overwhelmed.

Deliver on the right to employment enshrined in the Temporary Protection Directive. New arrivals will need support to navigate the written and unwritten rules of the local labor market. Ukrainians were already an important source of labor within the EU before the Russian invasion. Countries like Poland and Germany, which face persistent labor shortages, have actively sought to attract Ukrainian workers in recent years. Other member states confronted with similar shortages may learn from their example. The EU could seize the opportunity to coordinate country efforts in the area of credential recognition, using the digital tools that Germany and others developed in 2015 to efficiently recognize and certify the skills of Syrian arrivals.

Work with the large Ukrainian diaspora already in Europe. Before the invasion, there were some 2 million Ukrainians in Poland. Large Ukrainian communities also exist in Germany, the Czech Republic, Italy, Spain and Portugal. If mobilized effectively, these diaspora communities can be valuable in helping new arrivals integrate. Support from diaspora members and community groups to navigate employment, enroll children into schools and find longer-term accommodation can speed up integration. But such support cannot fall to the diaspora community alone.

Successful integration is essential, not just for the well-being of displaced people shell-shocked by the devastation to their lives and country but for Europe itself. The early open-arms welcome could turn cold if Europeans perceive the costs to their communities as too high, such as in strained public services and overcrowded schools.

Indeed, the conditions were set long before this crisis for potential acrimony, given the hard stance Poland, Hungary, Greece and other member states have taken in recent years—and even in recent months—against asylum-seekers from Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and other parts of the world. Echoes of this can be seen in the racialized response unfolding now as Africans and Asians living in Ukraine and attempting to flee are being treated far less favorably than white Ukrainians.

The devastation in Ukraine has been staggering, and the response to the huge displacement of people has been remarkably swift. Yet this moment calls for European policymakers, governments, humanitarian groups and others to keep a disciplined eye on mid- and longer-term integration even as they're racing to provide immediate food, medical attention and shelter. Much rides on their success.

Is 'pregnable' a word? If so, that's what Trump's border wall is

By NICHOLAS GOLDBERG
Los Angeles Times

Nicholas Goldberg is an associate editor and op-ed columnist for the Los Angeles Times.

My first reaction to the news that Mexican smuggling gangs have cut through Donald Trump's supposedly impregnable border wall more than 3,000 times was to laugh out loud.

According to an investigation by the Washington Post, the gangs use cheap power tools available at any hardware store. The cuts are made near the bottom of the fencing, severing the steel beams—known as bollards—from the concrete they're embedded in. At that point, they're left dangling, connected only at the top. They can then be pushed aside, creating a gap wide enough for people and drugs to pass through. The U.S. government has spent $2.6 million to repair the cuts between 2019 and 2021.

I laughed because, I mean, weren't we all waiting for this moment when Trump's ill-thought-out idea was definitively shown to be as foolish as it always seemed? I admit to taking a measure of eye-rolling satisfaction in that.

But then I caught myself. The border wall—and what it has come to represent in American politics—is no joke and shouldn't be treated as one. This is more than a schadenfreude moment.

Trump, you will remember, was swept into office in 2016 on a promise to build a barrier along the 1,954-mile-long U.S.-Mexican border. When he left office in 2021, he had built 458 miles out of a planned 738 miles of barrier—mostly tall metal fencing, including 77 miles in California. Much of that was in places where some kind of barrier had previously existed, although the Trump version is generally bigger and more imposing.

Trump's initial promises that Mexico would pay for the wall's construction never came to pass. Instead, U.S. taxpayers spent about $11 billion on the project; in some places it cost more than $40 million per mile. Trump also insisted that his "big beautiful wall" would be "virtually impenetrable."

From the start, critics said rightly that it would be ineffective and ludicrously costly.

But what always was most insidious about Trump's wall was the way it became a symbol and a physical embodiment of his broader message: America is endangered. The American dream itself is under siege from within the country and without.

Rapists! Criminals! Drug smugglers! Terrorists! That's who was massing at the southern border in Trump's mind—dark, dangerous outsiders from Mexico, along with other undesirables from "s---hole" countries.

His wall, running 18 to 30 feet tall in four states, was a sort of anti-Statue of Liberty, a visible declaration of our new attitude to the world: You can keep your huddled masses; Trump is protecting us now from carnage in our cities, corruption in our government and the border hordes.

Interestingly, the wall was originally just a Trump talking point—invented by political advisors Roger Stone and Sam Nunberg as a mnemonic device to remind the builder-turned-candidate to talk about illegal immigration in his speeches.

But on the campaign trail, the proposal electrified supporters. "Build the wall! Build the wall!" crowds shouted exuberantly. It became Trump's signature election promise because it was such a perfect metaphor.

The wall was unnecessary. It was racist. It was unworkable for many reasons. It wasn't even really a wall; it was a fence. But politically, it was brilliant.

And it remains a potent symbol. Just last week, long after its construction was halted by the Biden administration as "a waste of money" and a diversion from "genuine threats," two conservative House Republicans, Lauren Boebert, R-Colo., and Marjorie Taylor Greene, R-Ga., tried to undermine Biden by starting a chorus of "Build the Wall" during his State of the Union address.

That's why the Post's reporting was important. The wall is not impenetrable; it is not what was promised; it's a fiction.

Last March, smugglers cut an opening in Trump's bollard wall so broad that two SUVs filled with migrants were able to drive through. (One later hit a truck near Holtville, Calif., killing 13.) Maintenance records kept by Customs and Border Protection show the bollards are cut most often in California. The Border Patrol's El Centro sector has recorded the most breaches, 1,867; the San Diego sector ranked second, with 866.

Also, by the way, people are climbing up and over the wall using makeshift ladders or ropes.

The reasons for surges and declines in illegal immigration are complicated. But this much is clear: Despite the wall, migrants are still crossing the border without authorization in enormous numbers.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi once said publicly about the wall: "It's not who we are as a nation." She also said privately about Trump: "It's like a manhood thing for him."

Unfortunately, the "Build the Wall" nonsense can't yet be written off as ancient or forgotten history. Late last month, Trump gave his clearest indication to date that he intends to run for president again in 2024.

"We did it twice and we're going to be doing it again," he said at the Conservative Political Action Conference in Orlando, Fla. (Yes, even though the reality-based world knows he won only once, not twice, Trump continues to impose his delusional, counterfactual history on his listeners.)

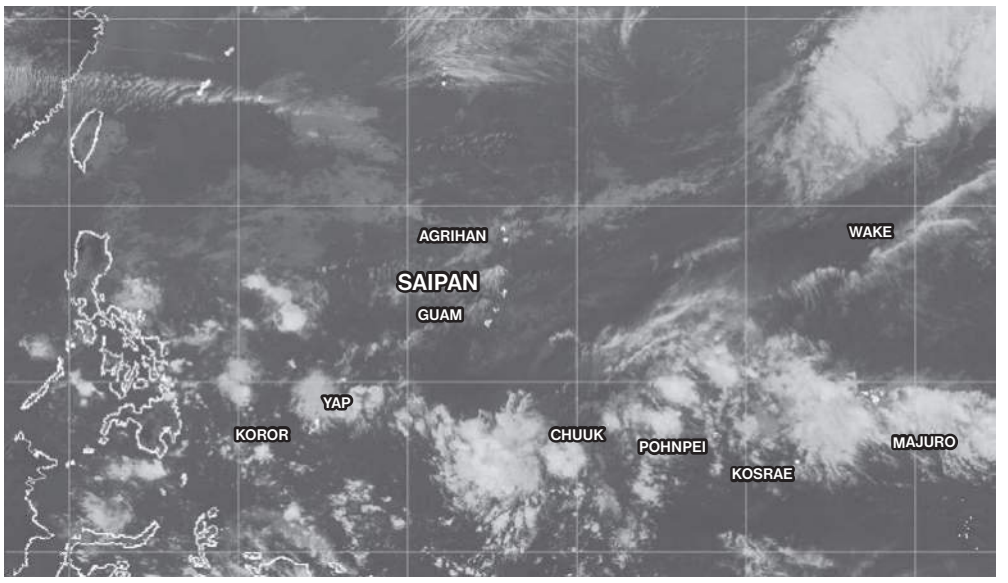
And can there be any doubt that if he comes back into power, his big, nasty, but symbolically potent border project will come back with him?

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Mostly cloudy. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms.	Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms.	Partly sunny with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms.	Mostly cloudy. Isolated showers and thunderstorms.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers
88º 76º	87º 75	85º 77º	86º 75º	87º 76º

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 11:30 AM, MONDAY, MARCH 14, 2022

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Late this morning, visible satellite imagery and Doppler radar shows widely scattered showers moving across the Marianas from the east. The latest buoy observations from Ritidian and Ipan indicated seas were in the 7 to 8 feet range, with the morning surf observations showing surf heights pushing 10 feet along the east facing reefs.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	30 / 25 °F
Palau	Scattered Thunderstorms	29 / 25 °F
Yap	Partly Cloudy	30 / 26 °F
Chuuk	Isolated Thunderstorms	30 / 26 °F
Pohnpei	Isolated Thunderstorms	30 / 26 °F
Kosrae	Isolated Thunderstorms	30 / 26 °F
Majuro	Thunderstorms	29 / 27 °F

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	06:25 AM	18:26 PM
Wednesday	06:24 AM	18:27 PM
Thursday	06:23 AM	18:27 PM
Friday	06:22 AM	18:27 PM
Saturday	06:22 AM	18:27 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	04:14 PM	15:50 PM
Wednesday	-	04:58 PM	16:43 PM
Thursday	-	05:39 PM	17:36 PM
Friday	-	06:19 PM	18:29 PM
Saturday	-	06:58 PM	19:23 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	PM Thunderstorms	32 / 26 °F
Beijing	Showers	26 / 18 °F
Hong Kong	AM Showers	26 / 24 °F
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	16 / 7 °F
London	Mostly Cloudy	15 / 9 °F
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	25 / 12 °F
Manila	PM Thunderstorms	32 / 26 °F
Melbourne	Showers	28 / 18 °F
Miami	AM Showers	26 / 24 °F
New York	Partly Cloudy	16 / 7 °F
Osaka	AM Clouds/PM Sun	18 / 8 °F
Paris	AM Light Rain	15 / 8 °F
Busan	Sunny	15 / 7 °F
Rome	Partly Cloudy	18 / 5 °F
Salem	Rain	19 / 12 °F
San Francisco	AM Showers	15 / 8 °F
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	12 / 1 °F
Tokyo	AM Rain	21 / 9 °F
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	20 / 6°F

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
11:48 AM	Low Tide	11:48
07:02 AM	High Tide	1.64
12:26 PM	Low Tide	1.02
5:23 PM	High Tide	1.60

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

■ Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.

■ Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.

■ Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.

■ Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.

■ Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.

■ Create a household plan of action, https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklisthousehold-ready.html

■ Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene

■ Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.

■ Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

■ Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:

• Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.

• Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

• Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

• Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mpand, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Rumor control

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Source: Office of the Governor

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 14, 2022

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	7:20am	8:05am	2, 4, 6
UA117	9:50am	10:35am	1, 3, 5, 7

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	6:30am	8:20am	1, 3, 5
UA183	8:00pm	9:50pm	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	7:20am	9:50pm	2, 4, 6 via Guam
UA117/183	9:50am	9:50pm	1, 3, 5, 7 via Guam

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

7C3406	3:10PM	6:55PM	Every 4 days (Jan 29-Mar 30)
TW9308	3:30PM	7:20PM	4, 7
OZ6243	4:00PM	7:40PM	3, 6

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

BX621	3:10PM	6:30PM	7

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA116	5:30am	6:16am	2, 4, 6
UA116	8:00am	8:46am	7
UA174	8:00am	8:46am	1, 3, 5

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

PR110	10:15pm	4:00am+1	2, 4, 7
UA184	10:40pm	4:30am+1	2, 5
UA184	10:55pm	4:45am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA184/116	10:40pm	6:16am+1	5 via Guam
UA184/174	10:40pm	8:46am+1	2 via Guam
UA184/116	10:55pm	6:16am+1	1, 3 via Guam
UA184/174	10:55pm	8:46am+1	4, 7 via Guam
UA184/116	10:55pm	8:46am+1	6 via Guam

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3405	8:30AM	2:10PM	Every 4 days (Jan 29-Mar 30)
TW9307	9:00AM	Q2:30PM	4, 7
OZ6233	9:00AM	2:30PM	3, 6

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

BX622	8:00AM	1:10PM	7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MAY 18, 2021

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30AM	9:00AM	Daily
1302	11:00AM	11:30AM	Daily
1303	1:30PM	2:00PM	Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
1304	3:30PM	4:00PM	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30AM	10:00AM	Daily
3102	12:00AM	12:30AM	Daily
3103	1:30PM	3:00PM	Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
3104	4:30PM	5:00PM	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Temporarily Unavailable

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

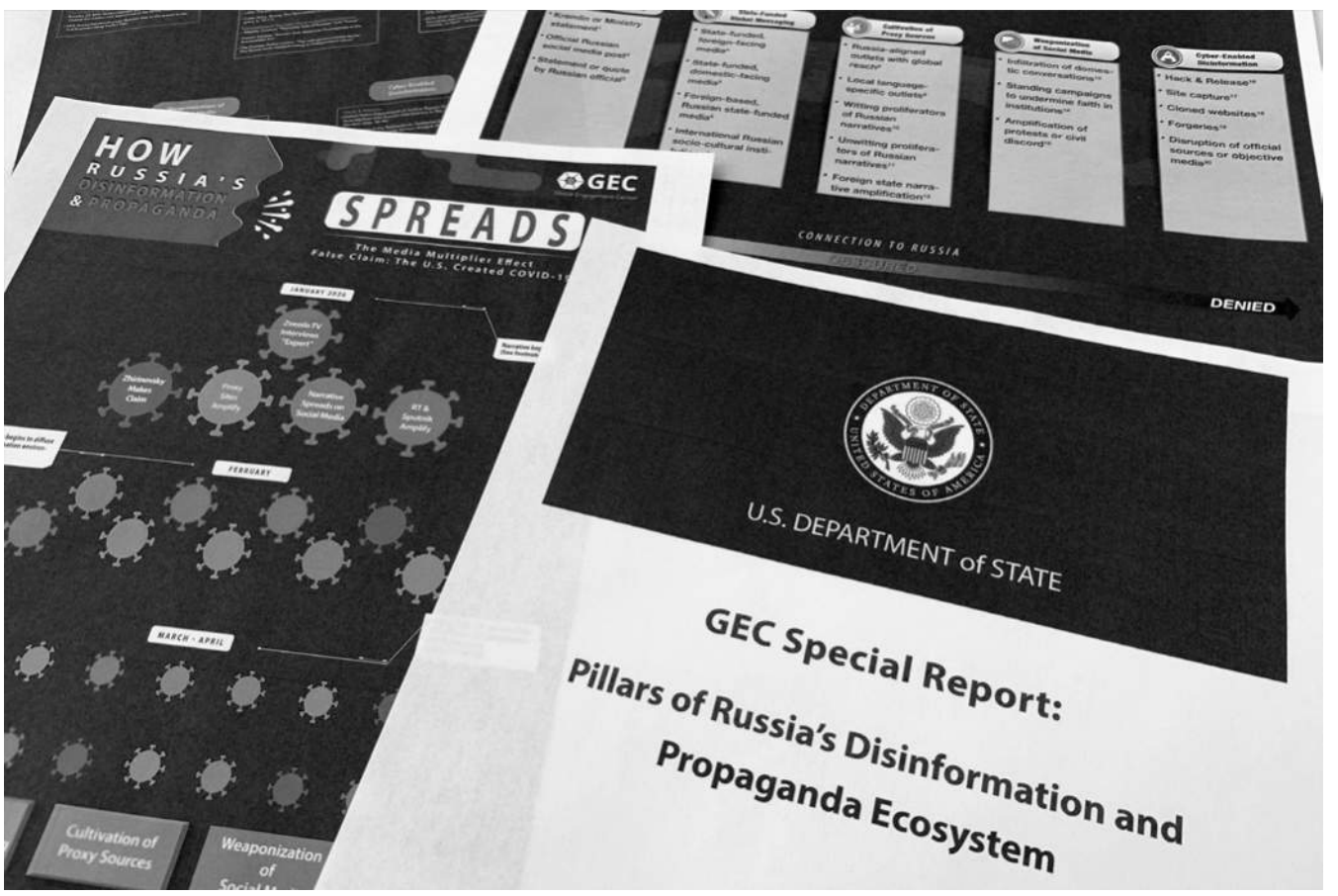
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00	7:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1205	11:00	11:15	Daily
1206	12:00	12:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1207	13:00	13:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily
1212	17:00	17:15	Temporarily Unavailable

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2101	7:30	7:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2105	11:30	11:45	Daily
2106	12:30	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2107	13:30	13:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily
2112	18:30	18:45	Temporarily Unavailable

Business

War censorship exposes Putin's leaky internet controls



Pages from the U.S. State Department's Global Engagement Center report released on Aug. 5, 2020, are seen in this photo. AP

BOSTON (AP)—Long before waging war on Ukraine, President Vladimir Putin was working to make Russia's internet a powerful tool of surveillance and social control akin to China's so-called Great Firewall.

So when Western tech companies began cutting ties with Russia following its invasion, Russian investigative journalist Andrei Soldatov was alarmed. He'd spent years exposing Russian censorship and feared that well-intentioned efforts to aid Ukraine would instead help Putin isolate Russians from the free flow of information, aiding the Kremlin's propaganda war.

"Look, guys the only space the Russians have to talk about Ukraine. and what is going on in Russia. is Facebook," Soldatov, now exiled in London. wrote on Facebook in the war's first week. "You cannot just, like, kill our access."

Facebook didn't, although the Kremlin soon picked up that baton, throttling both Facebook and Twitter so badly they are effectively unreachable on the Russian internet. Putin has also blocked access to both Western media and independent news sites in the country, and a new law criminalizes spreading information that contradicts the government's line. On Friday, the Kremlin said it would also restrict access to Instagram.

Yet the Kremlin's latest censorship efforts have revealed serious shortcomings in the government's bigger plans to straightjacket the internet. Any Russian with a modicum of tech smarts can circumvent Kremlin efforts to starve Russians of fact.

For instance, the government has so far had only limited success blocking the use of software known as virtual private networks, or VPNs, that allows users to evade content restrictions. The same goes for Putin's attempts to restrict the use of other censorship-evading software.

That puts providers of internet bandwidth and associated services sympathetic to Ukraine's plight in a tough spot. On one side, they face public pressure to punish the Russian state and economic reasons to limit services at a time when bills might well go unpaid. On the other, they're wary of helping stifle a free flow of information that can counter Kremlin disinformation—for instance, the state's claim that Russia's military is heroically "liberating" Ukraine from fascists.

Amazon Web Services, a major provider of cloud computing services, continues to operate in Russia, although it says it's not taking on any new customers. Both Cloudflare, which helps shield websites from denial-of-service attacks and malware, and Akamai, which boosts site performance by putting internet content closer to its audience, also continue to serve their Russian customers, with exceptions including cutting off state-owned companies and firms under sanctions.

Microsoft, by contrast, hasn't said whether it will halt its cloud services in the country, although it has suspended all new sales of products and services.

U.S.-based Cogent, which provides a major "backbone" for internet traffic, has cut direct connections inside Russia but left open the pipes through subsidiaries of Russian network providers at exchanges physically outside the country. Another major U.S. backbone provider, Lumen, has done the same.

Average US gas price rises 22% in two weeks to record $4.43

CAMARILLO, Calif. (AP)—The average U.S. price of regular-grade gasoline shot up a whopping 79 cents over the past two weeks to a record-setting $4.43 per gallon (3.8 liters) as Russia's invasion of Ukraine is contributing to already-high prices at the pump.

Industry analyst Trilby Lundberg of the Lundberg Survey said Sunday the new price exceeds by 32 cents the prior all-time high of $4.11 set in July 2008. But that's still quite a ways from the inflation-adjusted record high of about $5.24 per gallon.

The price at the pump is $1.54 higher than it was a year ago.

Lundberg said gas prices are likely to remain high in the short term as crude oil costs soar amid global supply concerns following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Prices at the pump were rising long before Russia invaded Ukraine as post-lockdown demand has pushed prices higher. Crude prices plummeted in early 2020 as economies around the world shut down because of COVID-19—the price of futures even turned negative, meaning some sellers were paying buyers to take oil. Prices rebounded, however, as demand recovered faster than producers pulled oil out of the ground and inventories dried up.

Then, the price increase accelerated after war began.

Energy prices are also contributing to the worst inflation that Americans have seen in 40 years, far outpacing higher wages.

Nationwide, the highest average price for regular-grade gas is in the San Francisco Bay Area, at $5.79 per gallon. The lowest average is in Tulsa, Oklahoma, at $3.80 per gallon.

According to the survey, the average price of diesel also spiked, up $1.18 over two weeks, to $5.20 a gallon. Diesel costs $2.11 more than it did one year ago.

Serbia to reduce number of flights to Moscow after criticism

BELGRADE, Serbia (AP)—AirSerbia will go back to one flight a day to Moscow, the Serbian president said, following criticism that the country's national carrier is busting a European Union-wide ban on flights to Russia and profiting from the war in Ukraine.

Since the Russian invasion started over two weeks ago, AirSerbia has doubled the number of flights to the Russian capital and introduced larger aircraft to increase the number of seats for what has become its most profitable destination.

Beside some Turkish carriers, Serbia's airline is the only European company that has kept on flying to Russia since the international flight ban was announced after Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine. That triggered criticism from both the EU and Ukraine.

"Serbia is the only one in Europe with an open sky to Russia," Ukrainian Deputy Foreign Minister Emine Dzheppar tweeted. "Making money on (Ukrainian) blood is unworthy of an EU candidate country."

Serbia's populist president, Aleksandar Vucic, said AirSerbia will go back to one flight to Moscow a day following "the witch hunt" against his country.

"And will those who are leading the chase against Serbia in connection with the flights to the capital of Russia be satisfied with that?" Vucic asked during a TV interview last night.

Referring to Turkey, he complained that "no one will touch those in NATO, who are partly in Europe and partly in Asia, and have 30 times more flights to Moscow than Serbia."

Vucic did not say when the flight reduction will start. There were two AirSerbia flights scheduled for Moscow on Sunday.

Trial set to consider approval of Boy Scouts bankruptcy plan

In this Feb. 12, 2020, file photo, a statue stands outside the Boy Scouts of America headquarters in Irving, Texas. AP

DOVER, Del. (AP)—More than two years after the Boy Scouts of America sought bankruptcy protection amid an onslaught of child sex abuse allegations, a judge will determine whether to confirm its proposed reorganization plan in a trial beginning Monday.

The trial in U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Delaware is expected to stretch over several weeks as attorneys and witnesses battle over a host of complex issues, including insurance rights, liability releases, the value of some 80,000 child sex abuse claims and how such a huge number of claims came to be filed.

The Boy Scouts, based in Irving, Texas, sought bankruptcy protection in February 2020 in an effort to halt hundreds of individual lawsuits and create a fund for men who say they were sexually abused as children involved in Scouting. Although the organization faced 275 lawsuits at the time, it found itself the subject of more than 82,000 sexual abuse claims in the bankruptcy case.

The reorganization plan calls for the Boys Scouts and its roughly 250 local councils to contribute up to $786 million in cash and property and assign certain insurance rights to a fund for abuse claimants. In return, the BSA and councils would be released from further liability.

The BSA's two largest insurers, Century Indemnity Co. and The Hartford, would contribute $800 million and $787 million, respectively, into the compensation fund. Other insurers have agreed to contribute about $69 million. The organization's former largest troop sponsor, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, commonly known as the Mormon church, has agreed to contribute $250 million for abuse claims involving the church. Congregations affiliated with the United Methodist Church have agreed to contribute $30 million.

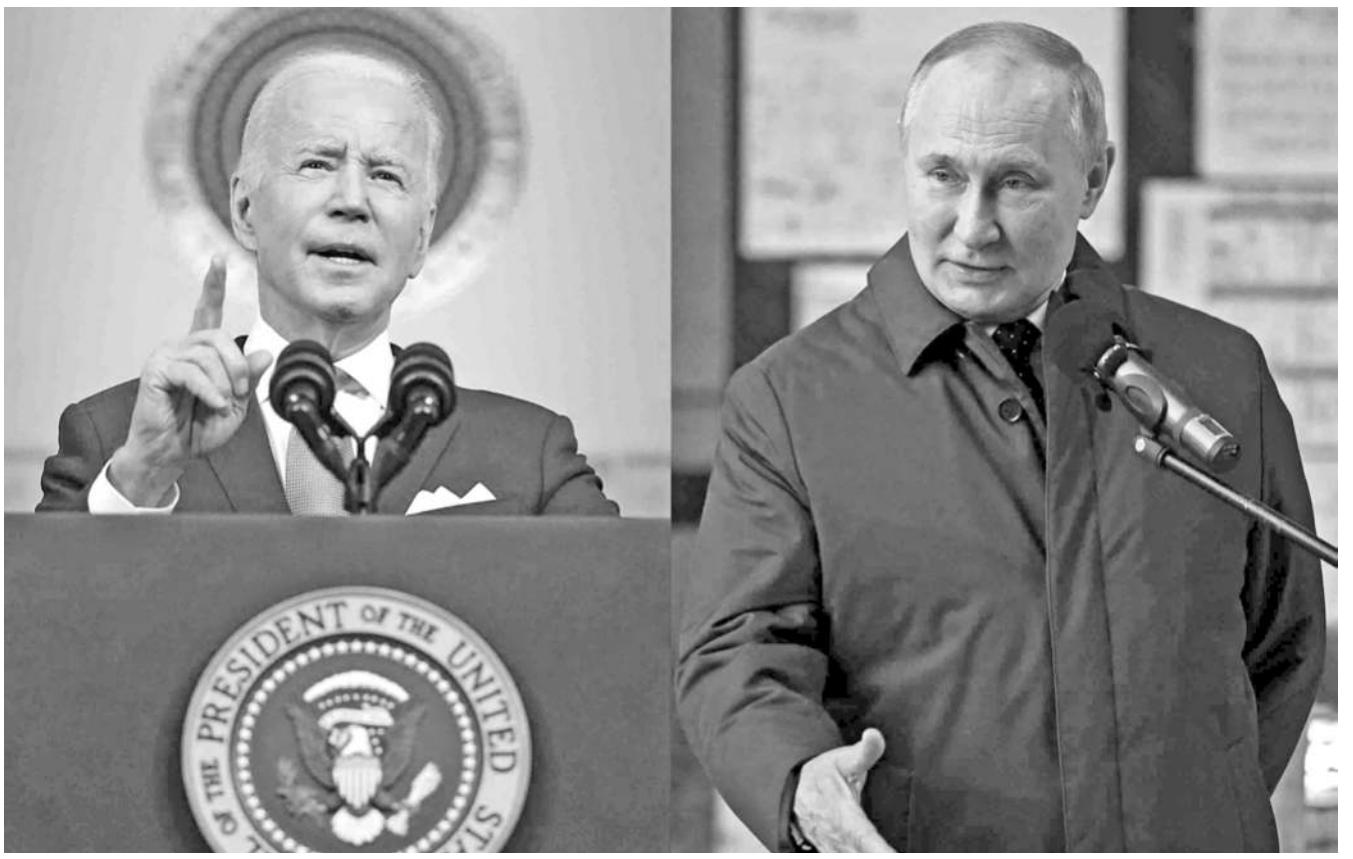
Nation

In Russian invasion of Ukraine, Cold War echoes reverberate

NEW YORK (AP)—A rivalry with Russia. A proxy battleground. Nuclear brinksmanship. For many generations of Americans, it's just like old times.

The invasion of Ukraine has rapidly returned echoes of a Cold War mentality to the United States, with a familiar foe in Russia. Bars have poured out their Russian vodka. McDonald's, a symbol of the end of the Soviet Union when it first opened in Moscow, has shuttered its Russian locations. Once again, a U.S. president sees a pitched ideological battle. "We will save democracy," President Joe Biden said in his State of the Union address.

For an America where Russia never quite went out of style as an evergreen villain in film and television, revived tensions with the Kremlin have drawn from a well-worn geopolitical script. A familiar, chilly East-West wind is blowing again.



AP

President Joe Biden announces Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson as his nominee to the Supreme Court at the White House in Washington on Feb. 25, 2022, left, and President Vladimir Putin speaks during a visit to the construction site of the National Space Agency at Khrunichev State Research and Production Space Centre, in Moscow, Russia, on Feb. 27, 2022.

"It's very much a Cold War echo," says James Hershberg, professor of history and international affairs at Georgetown University and former director of the Cold War International History Project of the Woodrow Wilson Center.

Hershberg sees much that's different about today's inflamed tensions with Russia. Vladimir Putin's aggressions, he says, don't seem driven by ideology the way communism was for the Soviet Union. A transformed media landscape, too, has helped turn Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy into a global protagonist.

But in a crisis that pits two nuclear superpowers on opposing sides, history is repeating in other ways. A Russian strategic overreach, Hershberg says, is again sparking a potentially perilous moment in international order.

"We are in a second Cuban Missile Crisis in many ways in terms of the danger of escalation," says Hershberg, whose books include "Marigold: The Lost Chance for Peace in Vietnam." "Putin is acting so irrationally he makes Nikita Khrushchev appear like a rational actor in comparison."

The largest land conflict in Europe since World War II, Russia's two-plus weeks of war in Ukraine has rallied Western alliances like few events before it. In repudiating Putin's invasion, the U.S. and its European allies have enacted crippling economic sanctions on Russia—which Biden on Tuesday extended to Russian crude oil—while still drawing the line on military engagement with Russia.

"If we're talking about a capitalized Cold War, I don't think I could call this Cold War II," says Fredrik Logevall, professor of history and international affairs at Harvard and Pulitzer-Prize winning author most recently of "JFK: Coming of Age in the American Century, 1917-1956."

"But," Logevall says, "if we're talking more generally about a cold war, if we mean a titanic struggle that involves all aspects of national power waged between two incompatible systems but short of outright military conflict—then yeah, I guess this is a cold war."

The Cold War is innately connected to the crisis in Ukraine partly because it so much informs Putin's world view. A former KGB agent, he once called the collapse of the Soviet Union "the greatest geopolitical catastrophe" of the 20th century. The invasion of Ukraine is intended to deter Western influence and NATO infringement from Russia's sphere of influence, and potentially to restore a Texas-sized part of the former Soviet Union.

Man sought in homeless killings in New York, Washington D.C.

NEW YORK (AP)—Authorities are searching for a man who is believed to have attacked multiple people who were sleeping on the streets in Washington, D.C., and New York City, killing two of his victims and injuring three others, police said.

District of Columbia police said Sunday in a news release its investigators are working with the NYPD to find the man who fatally shot and stabbed a man Wednesday in the district and killed another man Saturday in New York City.

The suspect shot and injured two other people experiencing homelessness earlier in the month in Washington and one other person Saturday in New York, police said.

"We are committed to sharing every investigative path, clue and piece of evidence with our law enforcement partners to bring this investigation to a swift conclusion and the individual behind these vicious crimes to justice," Metropolitan Police Chief Robert Contee said in the news release.

Police determined the same person committed the attacks based on the similarities of each shooting and evidence recovered from the scenes. The victims were attacked without provocation, police said.

New York Police Commissioner Keechant Sewell said in the joint news release the city's "homeless population is one of our most vulnerable and an individual praying on them as they sleep is an exceptionally heinous crime."

The federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives is assisting in the investigation.

New York Mayor Eric Adams said a task force composed of police officers and a homeless outreach team would focus on finding unhoused people in the subways and other locations and would urge them to seek refuge at city-owned shelters.

Obama tests positive for COVID-19, says he's 'feeling fine'

Obama

Former President Barack Obama said on Sunday that he had tested positive for the coronavirus, though he's feeling relatively healthy and his wife, Michelle, tested negative.

"I've had a scratchy throat for a couple days, but am feeling fine otherwise," Obama said on Twitter. "Michelle and I are grateful to be vaccinated and boosted."

Obama encouraged more Americans to get vaccinated against the coronavirus, despite the declining infection rate in the U.S. There were roughly 35,000 infections on average over the past week, down sharply from mid-January when that average was closer to 800,000.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that 75.2% of U.S. adults are fully vaccinated and 47.7% of the fully vaccinated have received a booster shot. The CDC relaxed its guidelines for indoor masking in late February, taking a more holistic approach that meant the vast majority of Americans live in areas without the recommendation for indoor masking in public. ***(AP)***

ACROSS THE NATION

Florida higher-speed train strikes, kills man

HOLLYWOOD, Fla. (AP)—Authorities say a Brightline train struck and killed a pedestrian, raising the death toll since the higher-speed train line resumed operations in South Florida. News outlets say police in Hollywood, Florida, are investigating the death. The collision late Saturday happened a short distance from a homeless shelter in Hollywood where there are no intersections for pedestrians for a half-mile, but there are small no trespassing signs by the tracks. Brightline has the worst fatality rate in the nation, according to an ongoing Associated Press analysis of Federal Railroad Administration data that began in 2019. Its trains have fatally struck 59 people since beginning test runs in 2017, an average of about one death every 33,000 miles (about 53,000 kilometers). Central Florida's SunRail has the second-worst rate among railroads that operate at least 100,000 miles (about 161,000 kilometers) annually – its trains have fatally struck someone every 105,000 miles since 2017. More than 800 railroads operate in the U.S.

OSHA: Worker lost arm from injury at US mail facility in NC

GREENSBORO, N.C. (AP)—The arm of a mechanic working at a U.S. mail facility in North Carolina was amputated last year after coming into contact with a machine that had a safety guard removed, the U.S. Labor Department has found. The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration said it inspected the facility in Greensboro following the injury in late September. The agency released its findings in a news release on Friday. The U.S. Postal Service operates the Greensboro Network Distribution Center. The federal inspection identified "repeat and serious safety violations, including failure to ensure that safety guards were in place as required and allowing conveyor guards to be routinely removed, leaving workers at risk of injuries," the news release said. The facility also failed to train staff on working near conveyors or proper methods for safely operating equipment, the agency said. And the facility allowed workers without adequate training and protective equipment to perform tests on live electrical equipment, the news release said. The agency said its citations come with $170,918 in proposed fines.

COVID-19 delays trial in plot to abduct Mich. Gov. Whitmer

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (AP)—The trial for four men accused of plotting to kidnap Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer that was scheduled to resume Monday has been postponed at least until Thursday because an essential participant tested positive for COVID-19. U.S. District Judge Robert Jonker ordered the delay Sunday. Undercover FBI agents and informants were expected to testify in the coming weeks, as were two co-conspirators who pleaded guilty prior to trial as prosecutors build their case against four defendants accused of plotting to kidnap Whitmer. The trial could last more than a month. In testimony last week, prosecutors sought to counter defense claims that the four were entrapped, tricked by the FBI into joining a kidnapping conspiracy that wouldn't have occurred to them otherwise. Prosecutors laid the groundwork of their case by calling FBI investigators to explain how they obtained covert recordings and social media posts. They entered some of that key evidence.

Asia

US official: Russia seeks military aid from China

WASHINGTON (AP)—A U.S. official said Russia asked China for military equipment to use in its invasion of Ukraine, a request that heightened tensions about the ongoing war ahead of a Monday meeting in Rome between top aides for the U.S. and Chinese governments.

In advance of the talks, White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan bluntly warned China to avoid helping Russia evade punishment from global sanctions that have hammered the Russian economy. "We will not allow that to go forward," he said.

The prospect of China offering Russia financial help is one of several concerns for President Joe Biden. A U.S. official, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive matters, said that in recent days, Russia had requested support from China, including military equipment, to press forward in its ongoing war with Ukraine. The official did not provide details on the scope of the request. The request was first reported by the Financial Times and The Washington Post.

Sullivan

The Biden administration is also accusing China of spreading Russian disinformation that could be a pretext for Russian President Vladimir Putin's forces to attack Ukraine with chemical or biological weapons.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has put China in a delicate spot with two of its biggest trading partners: the U.S. and European Union. China needs access to those markets, yet it also has shown support for Moscow, joining with Russia in declaring a friendship with "no limits."

In his talks with senior Chinese foreign policy adviser Yang Jiechi, Sullivan will indeed be looking for limits in what Beijing will do for Moscow.

China shuts business center of Shenzhen

AP

Residents in a locked down community look out from a closed gate as a worker in protective gear monitors access on Sunday, March 13, 2022, in Beijing.

BEIJING (AP)—China's government responded Sunday to a spike in coronavirus infections by shutting down its southern business center of Shenzhen, a city of 17.5 million people, and restricted access to Shanghai by suspending bus service.

Everyone in Shenzhen, a finance and technology center that abuts Hong Kong, will undergo three rounds of testing after 60 new cases were reported Sunday. All businesses except those that supply food, fuel and other necessities were ordered to close or work from home.

Case numbers in China's latest infection surge are low compared with other countries and with Hong Kong, which reported more than 32,000 on Sunday. But mainland authorities are enforcing a "zero tolerance" strategy and have locked down entire cities to find and isolate every infected person.

Shenzhen is home to some of China's most prominent companies, including telecom equipment maker Huawei Technologies Ltd., electric car brand BYD Auto, Ping An Insurance Co. and Tencent Holding, operator of the popular WeChat message service.

On the mainland, the government reported 1,938 new cases, more than triple Saturday's total.

About three-quarters, or 1,412 cases, were in Jilin province in the northeast, where the industrial metropolis of Changchun was placed under lockdown on Friday and families were told to stay home after a spate of infections.

Earthquakes shake Indonesia, Philippines; no tsunami threat

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—Strong, shallow underwater earthquakes shook western Indonesia and the Philippine capital region Monday but no serious damage was immediately reported and no tsunami warnings were issued.

In Indonesia, a magnitude-6.7 quake that was 16 kilometers (10 miles) deep struck about 169 kilometers (104.8 miles) west of Pariaman, a town in West Sumatra province, the U.S. Geological Survey said.

The Indonesian Meteorology and Geophysics Agency said the quake was felt in many parts of the province but there was no danger of a tsunami. It was occurred just before dawn and was centered about 161 kilometers (100 miles) southeast of South Nias, a district in North Sumatra province.

A 6.4-magnitude earthquake also shook parts of the Philippine capital region and outlying provinces at dawn but there were no reported damages or injuries, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said.

The offshore quake was set off by movement along the Manila Trench and its epicenter was about 110 kilometers (68 miles) west of Lubang island in Occidental Mindoro province, which lies south of Manila, the Philippine institute said. Its depth was about 28 kilometers (17 miles).

World

Pregnant woman, baby die after Russia bombed maternity ward

AP

Ukrainian emergency employees and volunteers carry an injured pregnant woman from a maternity hospital that was damaged by shelling in Mariupol, Ukraine, March 9, 2022.

MARIUPOL, Ukraine (AP)—A pregnant woman and her baby have died after Russia bombed the maternity hospital where she was meant to give birth, The Associated Press has learned. Images of the woman being rushed to an ambulance on a stretcher had circled the world, epitomizing the horror of an attack on humanity's most innocent.

In video and photos shot Wednesday by AP journalists after the attack on the hospital, the woman was seen stroking her bloodied lower abdomen as rescuers rushed her through the rubble in the besieged city of Mariupol, her blanched face mirroring her shock at what had just happened. It was among the most brutal moments so far in Russia's now 19-day-old war on Ukraine.

The woman was rushed to another hospital, yet closer to the frontline, where doctors labored to keep her alive. Realizing she was losing her baby, medics said, she cried out to them, "Kill me now!"

Surgeon Timur Marin found the woman's pelvis crushed and hip detached. Medics delivered the baby via cesarean section, but it showed "no signs of life," the surgeon said.

Then, they focused on the mother.

"More than 30 minutes of resuscitation of the mother didn't produce results," Marin said Saturday.

"Both died."

In the chaos after Wednesday's airstrike, medics didn't have time to get the woman's name before her husband and father came to take away her body. At least someone came to retrieve her, they said — so she didn't end up in the mass graves being dug for many of Mariupol's growing number of dead.

Accused of war crimes, Russian officials claimed the maternity hospital had been taken over by Ukrainian extremists to use as a base, and that no patients or medics were left inside. Russia's ambassador to the U.N. and the Russian Embassy in London called the images "fake news."

Associated Press journalists, who have been reporting from inside blockaded Mariupol since early in the war, documented the attack and saw the victims and damage firsthand. They shot video and photos of several blood-stained, pregnant mothers fleeing the blown-out maternity ward, medics shouting, children crying.

The AP team then tracked down the victims on Friday and Saturday in the hospital where they had been transferred, on the outskirts of Mariupol.

In a city that's been without food supplies, water, power or heat for more than a week, electricity from emergency generators is reserved for operating rooms.

WORLD BRIEFS

Iran claims missile barrage near US consulate in Iraq

BAGHDAD (AP) — Iran claimed responsibility Sunday for a missile barrage that struck near a sprawling U.S. consulate complex in northern Iraq, saying it was retaliation for an Israeli strike in Syria that killed two members of its Revolutionary Guard earlier this week. Iraq's Foreign Ministry on Sunday summoned Iran's ambassador to protest the attack, calling it a flagrant violation of the country's sovereignty. No injuries were reported in Sunday's attack on the city of Irbil, which marked a significant escalation between the U.S. and Iran. Hostility between the longtime foes has often played out in Iraq, whose government is allied with both countries. The attack drew harsh condemnation from the Iraqi government, which called it a "violation of international law and norms" and demanded an explanation from the Iranian leadership. Iraq's Foreign Ministry spokesman Ahmad al-Sahhaf told The Associated Press that the ministry summoned the Iranian ambassador, Iraj Masjedi, to deliver the diplomatic protest.

Report: Iran suspends talks with Saudi after mass execution

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Iran has decided to temporarily suspend its secret Baghdad-brokered talks aimed at defusing yearslong tensions with regional rival Saudi Arabia, Iranian state-linked media reported Sunday, a day after Saudi Arabia carried out its largest known mass execution in its modern history. The Iranian news website Nournews, considered close to the country's Supreme National Security Council, reported the government had unilaterally paused the talks with Saudi Arabia that have been ongoing in Baghdad over the past year aimed at restoring diplomatic ties. Iraq's foreign minister earlier had said the fifth round of talks between Saudi and Iranian representatives was due to resume on Wednesday.

Overdrive

The new Mitsubishi Outlander is outlandish.

And that's a good thing, because the auto industry's doormat wants you to know that things have changed. Recent Outlander and Outlander Sport models have been uninspired blue light specials, their interiors right out of a rental car catalogue, their tech and styling subpar.

The 2022 Outlander arrived in my driveway like a pinata at a birthday party. Head-turning outside, stuffed with treats inside. The grille was so outrageous I thought it might have been torn off a Chevy Silverado HD. Waterfall grille, mid-facia headlights, high-mounted running lights, more chrome than a Costco birthday cake has icing. The interior? Like no Mitsu I'd ever seen. Big leather accents, big digital screens, big three-row layout.

The Outlander is a compact-class SUV? Yes, but its attitude makes it seem a lot bigger.

Credit the Outlander's transformation to Mitsubishi's marriage to Nissan. I'm happy these two confused souls have found each other after some difficult years. Expect more of these unions as regulatory costs soar and governments force automakers to make expensive, small-volume EVs.

Outlander is the union's first offspring and is loaded with Nissan DNA while retaining Mitsubishi's more rouge-ish attitude. Speaking of Rogue, the Outlander is based on the same platform as Nissan's own popular SUV. Just as the new architecture has infused Rogue with some delicious, caramel chocolate flavor, so has it produced the best Outlander yet.

The Outlander's interior has been transformed with a tablet mounted high on the dash, bold horizontal lines, intuitive knob controls and generous console storage. Step up to my all-wheel-drive SEL Touring model and Cinderella really flaunts her new figure.

Quilted seats, head-up display, all-digital displays, automatic-sliding sunroof, standard three-row seating, seat memory, the works. Look more closely and Nissan Rogue-like touches are everywhere. Cool chiclet shifter. Large infotainment display, steering wheel-mounted controls, control knobs and more.

To set itself apart from its Nissan cousin, Outlander teases you with a combination of rugged attitude and homespun practicality. The latter is most obvious in Outlander's claim as the only standard three-row SUV in its class.

My chicks have flown the nest, but parents know the value of a flexible interior. Arrive at the school pickup line and inevitably your kids will add more rugrats to the passenger list. The Outlander's third-row seat room isn't generous, but the chairs will do in a pinch. And they are easily accessed with a top-seat tab that collapses the second-row seats forward. My tall frame actually managed to fold in back there, so I know two kids will survive just fine. Carry just four passengers and I could easily sit behind myself in the second row.

The Outlander's rugged attitude comes naturally for this rally-bred brand.

I come from the Pocket Rocket School of Mitsubishi when the company made snarling, all-wheel-drive, 300-horsepower Evo track assault vehicles. These bad boys spent their weekends hunting down Subaru STIs and Honda Civic Type Rs.

But Mitsu's real claim to fame dates to the 1980s and its rugged, go-anywhere Pajero SUV.

The truck-frame Pajero won global fame for its record 12 wins at the brutal Mideast Dakar Rally (how brutal? One year it was canceled for fear of terrorism). Call it Mitsubishi's Jeep Wrangler, though the model was curiously canceled in recent years.

In this Age of Ute, they'd be wise to bring it back as a brand halo. In a nod to its off-road history, Mitsu entered an Outlander in California's Rebelle Rally last year to celebrate the 20th anniversary win of pioneering pilot Jutta Kleinschmidt's at Dakar—the only woman to win the race. That's a start.

Pajero's spirit lives on in the production Outlander. And not just the aggressive exterior that looks like it wants to eat shrubbery for lunch.

All-wheel-drive optioned models like my tester come with unique off-road modes including NORMAL, ECO, TARMAC (Sport), GRAVEL and SNOW. This off-road personality is key to distinguishing Outlander from the crisp, volume-selling Rogue. Particularly when Outlander gets the same driver-assist systems (Rogue's ProPilot Assist vs. MI-Pilot Assist in Outlander) as well as the same 181-horsepower, 2.5-liter four-cylinder engine.

My loaded SEL Touring model included goodies like all-wheel drive, wireless Apple CarPlay, hands-free power liftgate, adaptive cruise and panoramic sunroof for $38,590—or, um, about the same price as a comparable Rogue Platinum model and the rockin', corner-carvin', best-in-class, 250-horsepower, $38,470, Soul Red Mazda CX-5.

Oh. That's a tough sell for a value brand trying to get back in the game. But the good news, at least, is that Outlander's got game. ***(The Detroit News)***

NUTS & BOLTS

- Vehicle type: Front-engine, front- and all-wheel-drive, seven-passenger compact SUV
- Price: $27,290, including $1,245 destination fee ($38,590 SEL Touring as tested)
- Powerplant: 2.5-liter 4 cylinder
- Power: 181 horsepower, 181 pound-feet of torque
- Transmission: continuously variable
- Performance: 0-60 mph, 8.2 seconds (Car and Driver); Top speed, 120 mph
- Weight: 3,864 pounds as tested
- Fuel economy: EPA, 24 mpg city/30 highway/26 combined

Report card

- Highs: Improved styling and interior; third row

Lows: Polarizing styling; gets pricey

- Overall: 3 stars

MITSUBISHI/TNS

The 2022 Mitsubishi Outlander starts at $25,795 on its two-wheel drive model, and $27,595 with its all-wheel drive system.

MOTORMOUTH: Blinded by the lights

By BOB WEBER
Chicago Tribune

Bob Weber is a writer and mechanic who became an ASE-certified Master Automobile Technician in 1976. He maintains this status by seeking certification every five years. Weber's work appears in professional trade magazines and other consumer publications. His writing also appears in automotive trade publications, Consumer Guide and Consumers Digest. *Send questions along with name and town to Motormouth, Rides, Chicago Tribune, 160 N. Stetson Ave., Fourth Floor, Chicago, IL 60601 or motormouth.tribune@gmail.com.*

Q: Are headlights on cars and trucks getting brighter or am I just getting older? Some makes and models seem brighter than others, including most pickup trucks.

A: Not only are we getting older, automobile lights are getting brighter. With my apologies to Manfred Mann, we may soon see some relief from being "blinded by the light (revved up like a deuce another runner in the night)." On Feb. 15, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration issued a final rule allowing automakers to install adaptive driving beam headlights on new vehicles. NHTSA says that the adaptive beam is particularly useful for distance illumination of pedestrians, animals and objects without reducing the visibility of drivers in other vehicles.

Q: I live in a rural setting south of the Twin Cities in Minnesota. I am questioning the legality of unlicensed recreational vehicles using local streets and local highways. Often, I witness golf carts or ATV type recreational vehicles on city streets. I am disturbed by this because of safety issues. They are often slow moving and do not have other safety tools like side mirrors or seat belts. I take issue with the fact that these vehicles do not have a license plate, indicating they pay for the use of our streets like the rest of us.

A: According to NHTSA, golf carts and similar vehicles that don't exceed 20 mph top speed may be driven on public roads, with approval by the local town's regulations. If they can go over 20 mph, they are required to meet federal motor vehicle laws. According to Kenyon city code, "… motorized golf cart[s] and electric or gas-powered vehicles with four wheels used primarily for light terrain slow moving operation that is (sic) equipped with a rearview mirror and a windshield" are legal. But you must first obtain a permit.

Q: Since we purchased our 2016 MKX we have had an issue with the rear door (storage/trunk) auto closure sensor that allows you to place your foot in a position under the back tailgate area that automatically opens and closes the door. Many times, we accidentally place our foot under the door while we are placing or removing items such as groceries and the door begins to lower without any warning sounds and will not stop until it hits something or someone. We have been to our Lincoln dealership and have asked repeatedly to stop the sensor. Someone should be able to either remove it or deactivate it.

A: You can enable or disable the power liftgate feature using the message center. But the button on the dash and the button on the key fob will continue to work. Check the message center section of your owner's manual.

Q: I am a 92-year-old woman and drive my Toyota Corolla 1,000 miles a year just locally for shopping. I took my car to the Toyota dealership for an oil change and inspection, and they informed me that the brake pads, brake fluid level and master cylinder need replacing at a cost of $99.95 and $149.95 with rotors resurfaced. I am really stressed as a result. My mileage is currently 5,400 on my 2016 Toyota Corolla. Can you please tell me if I really need to do this?

A: This is the kind of excrement that gives honest, hardworking mechanics a bad name. No, I don't think you need that stuff.

Life & Style

‘The Power of the Dog’ wins best picture at UK’s BAFTAs

LONDON (AP)—Sci-fi epic “Dune” won five prizes and brooding Western “The Power of the Dog” was named best picture as the British Academy Film Awards returned Sunday with a live, black-tie ceremony after a pandemic-curtailed event in 2021.

New Zealand filmmaker Jane Campion was named best director for “The Power of the Dog,” becoming only the third woman to win the prize in the awards’ seven-decade history.

Lead acting trophies went to Hollywood star Will Smith and British performer Joanna Scanlan, as an event that has worked to overcome a historic lack of diversity recognized a wide range of talents—including its first deaf acting winner in Troy Kotsur for “CODA.”

Last year’s awards ceremony was largely conducted online, with only the hosts and presenters appearing in person. This year’s return to collective celebration at London’s Royal Albert Hall took place in the shadow of Russia’s brutal invasion of Ukraine.

British film academy chairman Krishnendu Majumdar opened the show, hosted by Australian actor-comedian Rebel Wilson, with a message of support for Ukraine.

“We stand in solidarity with those who are bravely fighting for their country and we share their hope for a return to peace,” he said.

After that came the glitz, with 85-year-old diva Shirley Bassey and a live orchestra performing “Diamonds Are Forever” to mark the 60th anniversary of the James Bond films, Britain’s most successful movie export.

“Bond is turning 60, and his girlfriends are turning 25,” joked host Wilson, who toned down her usual bawdy material for the ceremony’s early-evening TV broadcast on the BBC.

Denis Villeneuve’s “Dune,” a space epic set on a desert planet, took five trophies from its 11 nominations: visual effects, production design, sound, Greig Fraser’s cinematography and Hans Zimmer’s score.

“The Power of the Dog,” set in 1920s Montana and starring Benedict Cumberbatch as a ranch owner, was nominated in eight categories and won two big ones: best film and best director. Campion is only the third female winner in that category, but the second in two years after Chloe Zhao for “Nomadland” in 2021.

Cumberbatch lost to Smith, who was named best actor for his performance as the father of Serena and Venus Williams in “King Richard.”

‘The Batman’ and a BTS concert broadcast power box office

NEW YORK (AP)—In its second weekend of release, Warner Bros.’ “The Batman” easily remained the No. 1 movie in North American theaters with $66 million in ticket sales, according to studio estimates Sunday, while a live BTS concert broadcast was one-day-only blockbuster.

Matt Reeves’ Caped Crusader reboot starring Robert Pattinson and Zoë Kravitz held well in its second week, dropping a modest 51%—a good rate for a comic book movie—from its $134 million debut and bringing its domestic total to $238.5 million. It’s done nearly identical business overseas, leading to $463.2 million globally thus far.

EVAN AGOSTINI/INVISION/AP

Peter Sarsgaard, from left, Jeffrey Wright, Paul Dano, Robert Pattinson, Zoe Kravitz, Andy Serkis attend the world premiere of “The Batman” at Lincoln Center Josie Robertson Plaza on Tuesday, March 1, 2022, in New York.

“The Batman,” Warner Bros.’ first exclusively theatrical release in more than a year after experimenting with simultaneous streaming releases through 2021, is expected to have much of March to itself at theaters. No new wide releases opened over the weekend and “The Batman” should remain atop the box office for at least another week. Partly because theaters were so dependent on “The Batman” this month, AMC Entertainment and some other chains introduced ticket prices that were $1 to $1.50 higher for the film’s first eight days of release.

William Hurt, star of ‘Broadcast News,’ ‘Body Heat,’ dies

NEW YORK (AP)—William Hurt, whose laconic charisma and self-assured subtlety as an actor made him one of the 1980s foremost leading men in movies such as “Broadcast News,” “Body Heat” and “The Big Chill,” has died. He was 71.

Hurt’s son, Will, said in a statement that Hurt died Sunday of natural causes. Hurt died peacefully, among family, his son said. The Hollywood Reporter said he died at his home in Portland, Oregon. Deadline first reported Hurt’s death. Hurt was previously diagnosed with prostate cancer that had spread to the bone in 2018.

Hurt

In a long-running career, Hurt was four times nominated for an Academy Award, winning for 1985’s “Kiss of the Spider Woman.” After his breakthrough in 1980’s Paddy Chayefsky-scripted “Altered States” as a psychopathologist studying schizophrenia and experimenting with sensory deprivation, Hurt quickly emerged as a mainstay of the ‘80s.

In Lawrence Kasdan’s 1981 steamy neo noir “Body Heat,” Hurt starred alongside Kathleen Turner as a lawyer coaxed into murder. In 1983’s “The Big Chill,” again with Kasdan, Hurt played the brooding Vietnam War veteran Nick Carlton, one of a group of college pals who gather for their friend’s funeral.

Acclaimed filmmaker Brent Renaud killed in Ukraine

By PAMELA SAMPSON
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Renaud

Brent Renaud, an acclaimed filmmaker who traveled to some of the darkest and most dangerous corners of the world for documentaries that transported audiences to little-known places of suffering, died Sunday after Russian forces opened fire on his vehicle in Ukraine.

The 50-year-old Little Rock, Arkansas, native was gathering material for a report about refugees when his vehicle was hit at a checkpoint in Irpin, just outside the Ukrainian capital of Kyiv. Ukraine’s Interior Ministry said the area has sustained intense shelling by Russian forces in recent days.

Renaud was one of the most respected independent producers of his era, said Christof Putzel, a filmmaker and close friend who had received a text from Renaud just three days before his death. Renaud and Putzel won a 2013 Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University journalism award for “Arming the Mexican Cartels,” a documentary on how guns trafficked from the United States fueled rampant drug gang violence.

“This guy was the absolute best,” Putzel told The Associated Press via phone from New York City. ”He was just the absolute best war journalist that I know. This is a guy who literally went to every conflict zone.”

The details of Renaud’s death were not made immediately clear by Ukrainian authorities, but American journalist Juan Arredondo said the two were traveling in a vehicle toward the Irpin checkpoint when they were both shot. Arredondo, speaking from a hospital in Kyiv, told Italian journalist Annalisa Camilli that Renaud was hit in the neck. Camilli told the AP that Arredondo himself had been hit in the lower back.

“We crossed the first bridge in Irpin, we were going to film other refugees leaving, and we got into a car, somebody offered to take us to the other bridge, we crossed the checkpoint, and they started shooting at us,” Arredondo told Camilli in a video interview shared with the AP.

A statement from Kyiv regional police said that Russian troops opened fire on the car. Hours after the shooting of Renaud, Irpin mayor Oleksandr Markushyn said journalists would be denied entry to the city.

Neighborhood frostier amid political divide

DEAR ABBY: My wife and I share a common driveway with our neighbors. These neighbors are keenly aware that my wife and I do not share their political views. After the election, one of them quit speaking to us or even acknowledging our presence.

After a few months, I approached him in the shared driveway and said “Bob, it is obvious you are not speaking to me. If I have offended you, let me know and I will do my best to apologize.” His response was, “I’ll think about it.” That was the last I heard for a while, but he still shunned me.

A few months later, he rang my doorbell and asked us to accept his apology, saying, “Only God can judge.” I knew what he meant. Life is short, the neighborhood is small and neighbors need each other, so my wife and I accepted his “apology.”

Now, months later, he is back to not acknowledging our existence. I see him several times a week. I am happy to continue “turning the other cheek,” but with no results so far, both cheeks are getting red. Any suggestions?

FREE THINKER IN TEXAS

DEAR FREE THINKER: Stop turning any of your cheeks in this neighbor’s direction. It’s a shame that so many relationships have been destroyed in this country because people were unwilling to TALK with or LISTEN to each other. Folks on both sides of the aisle had their reasons for voting the way they did in the last presidential election. Those reasons cannot be understood unless they are calmly discussed. Individuals who are not mature enough to discuss their differences are really not worth your time, so ignore what he’s doing and go on with your life.

■■■■

DEAR ABBY: I’m a 54-year-old man, blessed with a good life, family, friends and a good job for 35 years. I was married for six years. The first four of them were very good. We were blessed with a sweet, beautiful daughter. Her mother and I have been divorced for more than 20 years now.

I’m a decent-looking guy. I’m kind, honest and fun, and I have good morals and a sense of humor. I have dated many women since the divorce, but most of those relationships were all about sex. I’m not complaining, but I’d like to find that one woman with whom I could share everything—travel, dinner, ballgames, concerts, etc. The few of those I’ve encountered over the last 20 years have ended up getting married to someone else. Abby, can you help? I feel ...

CURSED IN ARKANSAS

DEAR CURSED: If I read your letter correctly, you have been jumping into bed with women before you find out what they are all about. Your chances of finding someone to share the rest of your life with might improve if you make the effort to form friendships first. Although you may not find someone who enjoys all of the activities you mentioned on your wish list, you might forge rewarding friendships along the way and enjoy some of them together.

DEAR ABBY

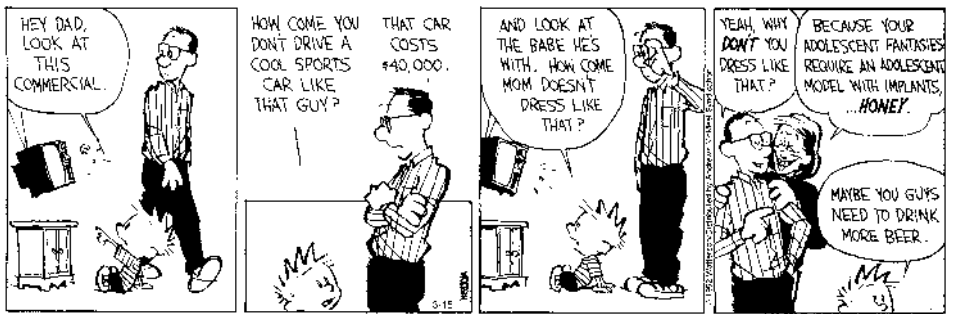
By Abigail Van Buren
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


HEY DAD, LOOK AT THIS COMMERCIAL.
HOW COME YOU DON'T DRIVE A COOL SPORTS CAR LIKE THAT GUY?
THAT CAR COSTS $40,000.
AND LOOK AT THE BABE HE'S WITH. HOW COME MOM DOESN'T DRESS LIKE THAT?
YEAH, WHY DON'T YOU DRESS LIKE THAT?
BECAUSE YOUR ADOLESCENT FANTASIES REQUIRE AN ADOLESCENT MODEL WITH IMPLANTS, ...HONEY.
MAYBE YOU GUYS NEED TO DRINK MORE BEER.

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

FANCY, DAD IS COMING TO THE PARTY. I NEED YOU TO BEHAVE.
NO CONFLICT. NO SNARKY COMMENTS.
SEE? LIKE THAT! AND I KNOW FOR A FACT THAT HE DOES WEAR DEODORANT.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

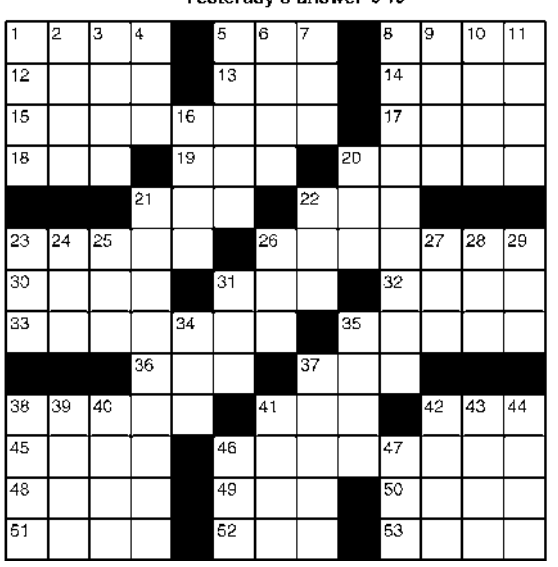
By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Natalie or Nat
5 Leftover bit
8 No neatnik
12 Russian river
13 Sheep's cry
14 "Downton Abbey" countess
15 Chew the fat
17 Frost
18 Standard
19 Born
20 Bracelet site
21 Map lines (Abbr.)
22 Monk's title
23 Verizon, e.g.
26 Migratory grasshoppers
30 — Hashanah
31 Inlet
32 Madhouses
33 C-3PO, for one
35 Hunk of cheese
36 Have lunch
37 Scratch the surface
38 Taxpayer's dread
41 Lincoln or Ford
42 — carte
45 Rebuff
46 Fruit-flavored liquor
48 Melody
49 Long of "Soul Food"
50 Gear teeth
51 From the U.S.
52 Texas tea
53 Quarrel

DOWN
1 Point
2 Killer whale
3 "Oz" cast member
4 Shade provider
5 Slender woodwinds
6 Demolish
7 — kwon do
8 Wiry-haired dog
9 Take a gander
10 Exam format
11 Naked
16 Aware of
20 Lob's path
21 Liev of "Ray Donovan"
22 "The Crown" actress Claire
23 La-la lead-in
24 A billion years
25 Leary's drug
26 Young bloke
27 Turf
28 Dress
29 Compass dir.
31 Iota
34 Feedbag bit
35 Tip off
37 Taj —
38 Hammett pooch
39 "E Pluribus —"
40 Sand formation
41 Roman 202
42 Per person
43 Links org.
44 Admin. aide
46 — -Cat
47 Rm. coolers

Solution time: 22 mins.

Yesterday's answer 3-15



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5855**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Kellan Lutz, 37; will.i.am, 47; Eva Longoria, 47; Bret Michaels, 59.

Happy Birthday: Bide your time, do the groundwork and leave no room for error. Put your energy to good use, and you'll get the acknowledgment you desire. Hard work and dedication will pay off if you spend time perfecting what's important and honing your skills to suit your needs. Work quietly behind the scenes to ensure everything falls into place. Your numbers are 8, 17, 21, 26, 32, 39, 43.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Dig in and do what you can to make a difference. Your input and dedication will impress someone who can help you advance. Research thoroughly before you make a physical change or commit to something until you know what's entailed. ✪✪✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Say little and do a lot. Size up situations, and schedule your time to ensure you fulfill your obligations. Refuse to let emotional issues interfere with your responsibilities. Anger and upset will make you look bad and give someone else the upper hand. ✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Put your heart into taking care of your duties. Refuse to let anyone lead you astray or take advantage of your time, skills and helpful nature. A family burden is best dealt with in private. Do what's necessary to avoid a dispute. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Focus on partnerships and working alongside others. Share mutual respect, and pool your resources to enrich whatever you pursue. Information you receive will change the way you help. Address financial, medical and contractual concerns practically. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Don't take on responsibilities that you can't accomplish on your own. Relying on others will lead to disappointment. Know your limitations, make promises based on your capabilities. Rethink your situation, protect your assets and reputation. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Consider suggestions, and turn good ideas into something that works for you. Putting a unique spin on whatever you do or say will give you the edge and help you persuade others to provide you with a chance to do something great. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Keep expenses to a minimum. Determine what you can do without, and sell what you no longer need. Focus on personal gain, fitness and achieving peace of mind. Put a plan in place that eases stress. Don't spend to impress others. ✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Tidy up issues that are holding you back. Putting off conversations instead of addressing likes and dislikes will hinder your chance to take advantage of the things you genuinely want to do. Clear up unfinished business, and embrace new beginnings. ✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Concentrate on what's doable. Listen to what others have to offer, but don't take a risk or trust someone offering the impossible. Emotional spending and joint ventures will disrupt your plans. Do your own thing. ✪✪✪✪✪

CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Home improvements that enhance your ability to earn more, live better and follow your dreams are within reach. Adjustments to how you use your cash, skills and experience will play a role in how much you achieve. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Make an honest assessment of your life and relationships, and follow a path that suits your needs. Trusting someone to look out for your interests will put you in an awkward position. Set goals and follow through. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Slow down; don't let temptation lead you astray. Be diligent and consider your options, the cost involved and the consequences if things don't go as planned. Experiment first, and you'll find a cheaper and wiser way to reach your objective. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are entertaining, flexible and impu lsive. You are innovative and perceptive.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

8		2	1		3			4
	6		7				2	
		1				9		8
9				2			1	5
2	7			8				6
1		5				7		
	4				6		5	
6			3		5	1		2

Difficulty Level ★★

3/15

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

2	7	9	6	3	8	1	5	4
8	3	5	4	1	9	6	7	2
1	6	4	5	2	7	9	8	3
9	8	2	7	6	5	3	4	1
7	5	1	9	4	3	2	6	8
3	4	6	2	8	1	7	9	5
6	1	3	8	7	4	5	2	9
5	2	8	3	9	6	4	1	7
4	9	7	1	5	2	8	3	6

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

STRETCHING IS IMPORTANT Solution: 7 letters

E	M	N	S	J	F	E	X	H	Ⓐ	L	E	S	C	T
S	S	F	E	N	O	I	T	C	A	Ⓡ	T	N	O	C
C	G	L	T	C	T	G	T	L	Y	R	Ⓜ	U	M	I
L	U	E	U	S	K	S	I	N	E	C	R	Ⓢ	P	R
A	S	X	L	P	E	G	I	N	E	N	L	E	E	C
S	G	I	G	C	N	H	G	R	A	S	R	E	T	U
S	N	O	L	M	I	T	C	M	W	F	S	T	I	L
E	O	N	E	P	H	S	E	O	O	P	T	O	T	A
S	R	N	S	E	S	N	L	R	O	T	F	R	I	T
I	T	E	N	E	T	F	M	R	U	E	I	S	O	I
C	S	O	R	I	D	A	T	S	U	N	L	O	N	O
R	T	T	S	O	N	S	W	I	M	C	N	K	N	N
E	S	S	O	C	O	R	E	F	L	E	X	I	N	I
X	U	L	E	C	N	A	L	A	B	I	K	E	N	A
E	B	O	N	E	S	C	I	T	S	A	N	M	Y	G

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Alignment, Ankle, Arms, Balance, Bike, Blood Flow, Bones, Chest, Circulation, Classes, Competition, Contraction, Core, Curls, Cycle, Exercises, Exhale, Fitness, Flexion, Gain, Glutes, Gymnastics, Hips, Jog, Legs, Lifts, Motion, Neck, Performance, Pulse, Reflex, Running, Sports, Strengthen, Stress, Strong, Swim, Tissue, Tone, Torso, Tournament, Wrist

Yesterday's Answer: Sleeping

To purchase **THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volumes 47 through 60** order online at www.WonderWordBooks.com.

Tom Brady is returning to Tampa Bay

TAMPA, Fla. (AP) — Tom Brady's retirement lasted 40 days.

Brady said Sunday he's returning to the Tampa Bay Buccaneers for his 23rd NFL season.

The seven-time Super Bowl champion announced his decision on Twitter and Instagram, saying he has "unfinished business." The news stole the spotlight from the NCAA's Selection Sunday.

"These past two months I've realized my place is still on the field and not in the stands," Brady wrote. "That time will come. But it's not now. I love my teammates, and I love my supportive family. They make it all possible. I'm coming back for my 23rd season in Tampa."

Brady led the Buccaneers to a Super Bowl title following the 2020 season and NFC South championship last season. He teamed with coach Bill Belichick to win six Super Bowls during 20 seasons with the New England Patriots.

The 44-year-old Brady led the NFL in yards passing (5,316), touchdowns (43), completions (485) and attempts (719) in 2021, but the Buccaneers lost at home to the Los Angeles Rams in the divisional round.

"Tom Brady loves to play football as much as anyone I have ever been around," Buccaneers coach Bruce Arians said. "As Tom said, his place right now is on the football field. He is still playing at a championship level and was as productive as anyone in the league last season. We are ecstatic that he decided to continue playing and working toward winning another championship."

AP

Tampa Bay Buccaneers quarterback Tom Brady (12) throws a pass against the Los Angeles Rams during the first half of an NFL divisional round playoff football game Jan. 23, 2022, in Tampa, Fla.

Brady cited his desire to spend more time with his wife, supermodel Gisele Bundchen, and three children when he decided to walk away from the game on Feb. 1. But he changed his mind about staying home, a day after attending the Manchester United match against Tottenham Hotspur.

Brady sat with the Glazer Family, who own Manchester United and the Buccaneers.

His reversal sent shock waves throughout the sports world, and his teammates and Buccaneers fans reacted with jubilation.

All-Pro right tackle Tristan Wirfs called it "unreal." Receivers Mike Evans and Chris Godwin shared their joy in emojis.

Giants safety Logan Ryan said Brady's return is "good for football." Rams star cornerback Jalen Ramsey tweeted: "THANK YOU! throw that last touchdown on somebody else."

Many Hall of Fame players across several sports returned to playing after retiring, including Michael Jordan, Magic Johnson and Bob Cousy in the NBA, Brett Favre and Reggie White in the NFL, Guy Lafleur and Mario Lemieux in the NHL.

The Buccaneers are hopeful star tight end Rob Gronkowski also returns. Brady convinced his buddy to unretire to join him in Tampa in 2020. The team lost Pro Bowl guard Ali Marpet, who retired at age 28. But Godwin is staying after getting the franchise tag.

Brady's decision comes right before the NFL free agency period begins. The Bucs have several key players set to hit the open market: running back Leonard Fournette, cornerback Carton Davis, safety Jordan Whitehead, linebacker Jason Pierre-Paul, defensive tackle Ndamukong Suh, Gronkowski and others.

They kept one of those key players when Pro Bowl center Ryan Jensen agreed to a three-year contract late Sunday night, his agent Mike McCartney said on Twitter.

Brady's return should impact their decisions and the team's plans. Tampa's odds for winning the Super Bowl went from 25:1 to 7 1/2:1, tied with Green Bay for second-best behind Buffalo at 7:1, according to FanDuel Sportsbook.

"We are thrilled that Tom has decided to come back this season," Bucs general manager Jason Licht said. "We said we would leave all options open for him should he reconsider his retirement and today's announcement is something we have been preparing for in recent days.

"Bruce and I have had plenty of conversations with Tom recently that led us to believe there was a realistic chance he would want to come back. Tom is the greatest quarterback of all time who is still playing at an elite level. With this decision now made, we will continue to move forward with our offseason plans to reload this roster for another championship run."

Brady is the NFL's career leader in yards passing (84,520) and TDs (624). He's the only player to win more than five Super Bowls and has been MVP of the game five times.

Brady has won three NFL MVP awards, been a first-team All-Pro three times and selected to the Pro Bowl 15 times. He is 243-73 in his career in the regular season and 35-12 in the playoffs.

He's back to build on all those numbers.

Big-ticket free agents could leave big holes behind them

By JOSH DUBOW
AP PRO FOOTBALL WRITER

The start of the NFL free agency period next week is the first big chance for teams to make major moves to fill significant holes on their rosters.

But for nearly every big-ticket addition that brings optimism to a fan base in hopes of an overhaul — similar to what Cincinnati did last year to build a defense capable of getting the Bengals to the Super Bowl last season — another team will be dealing with a void.

It could be playoff teams like the Super Bowl champion Rams or the Arizona Cardinals dealing with the potential loss of star pass rushers. Perhaps the Patriots or Chiefs looking at holes in the secondary. Maybe teams like New Orleans or Washington facing questions on the offensive line. Regardless, the ability to deal with these potential losses could determine who has success in 2022.

Here's a look at some of the key free agents that could leave their old teams searching for replacements if they happen to sign elsewhere:

SAINTS' TERRON ARMSTEAD

New Orleans usually finds a way to keep its coveted free agents, but the cap-strapped Saints might not be able to pull it off with Armstead. The three-time Pro Bowler is one of the top pass-blocking left tackles and would leave a big void on a New Orleans offense with several question marks. Armstead has missed significant time with injuries over his career and played only eight games last season because of elbow and knee injuries.

CARDINALS' CHANDLER JONES

Jones bounced back from an injury-plagued 2020 season to make 10 1/2 sacks in 2021 for his seventh double-digit sack season. Only 12 players have had more seasons with at least 10 sacks and Jones' 107 1/2 for his career lead the NFL since he made his debut in 2012. Arizona has Markus Golden locked up for one more season on a reasonable deal but has few proven options beyond that besides soon-to-be 33-year-old J.J. Watt, who has 10 sacks the past three seasons.

RAMS' VON MILLER

Miller provided a big boost to the Super Bowl champions after being acquired during the season for a pair of second-day draft picks. Miller had five sacks in eight games for the Rams and added four more in the playoffs as one of the key pieces of a championship defense. Miller could choose to return to Denver, which would force the Rams to find another edge rusher to team with Leonard Floyd.

PATRIOTS' J.C. JACKSON

New England opted against using the franchise tag on one of the top man-to-man cornerbacks in the league, leaving an attractive option for other teams. Jackson entered the league as an undrafted free agent in 2018 and leads the NFL with 25 interceptions since then. New England already lost star cornerback Stephon Gilmore in a trade and now could be forced to replace the other half of what had been one of the top coverage duos in the league.

CHIEFS' TYRANN MATHIEU

The "Honey Badger" has been a key part of the Kansas City defense since signing as a free agent in 2019 with 13 interceptions, four fumble recoveries and the versatility to play in several roles. But after using the franchise tag on left tackle Orlando Brown Jr. to go with big-ticket deals already with several other stars, there might not be enough cap room for the Chiefs to keep Mathieu. His playmaking ability could provide a big boost to another contender and leave a major hole in Kansas City.

PACKERS' DE'VONDRE CAMPBELL

One of last season's best free agent bargains could hit the open market again this season with the Packers up against the cap after using a franchise tag on Davante Adams and Aaron Rodgers returning. Campbell figures to get a lot more than the $2.5 million he earned last season when he was an All-Pro in Green Bay. Campbell is a three-down linebacker and durable, playing 16 games in each of the last five seasons, missing only a meaningless Week 18 game last season.

COMMANDERS' BRANDON SCHERFF

Scherff is a top interior offensive lineman and should hit the open market after Washington used franchise tags to keep him the past two seasons. Scherff is strong in both the run and pass game but hasn't played a full season since 2016 because of several mostly minor injuries. New Commanders QB Carson Wentz has struggled when he hasn't had good protection in his career, so Washington will need to find a replacement if Scherff leaves.

Suns have 48-point 1st quarter, rout Lakers, 140-111

NEW YORK (AP)—Devin Booker scored 30 points, Deandre Ayton had 23 points and 16 rebounds and the NBA-leading Phoenix Suns routed the Los Angeles Lakers 140-111 on Sunday night.

LeBron James led the Lakers, who have lost 10 straight road games, with 31 points, seven rebounds and six assists. He did not play in the fourth quarter.

James reached a milestone with his 10,000th career assist in the second quarter on Carmelo Anthony's 3-pointer. James in the only player in NBA history with at least 30,000 points, 10,000 rebounds and 10,000 assists.

Booker also had 10 assists and four steals. Mikal Bridges added 18 points to help Phoenix move 40 games over .500 at 54-14.

The Suns broke it open in the first five minutes. They went on a 14-0 run — punctuated by back-to-back 27-foot 3-pointers by Booker — to take a 16-6 lead, and kept pouring it on.

Phoenix led 48-22 after the first quarter, the Suns' highest output in a quarter this season and the most the Lakers have given up in a quarter in the shot-clock era.

AP

Phoenix Suns guard Devin Booker, top, drives against Los Angeles Lakers guard Austin Reaves (15) during the second half of an NBA basketball game, Sunday, March 13, 2022, in Phoenix.

Nets 110, Knicks 107

In New York, Kevin Durant scored a season-high 53 points, making the tiebreaking 3-pointer in a sensational show for a crowd that included Kyrie Irving, and Brooklyn beat New York.

Durant's 3-pointer snapped a 103-all tie with 56 seconds remaining. He added four more free throws to keep the Nets ahead, finishing one point shy of his career high. Durant also had nine assists and six rebounds in his 60th career 40-point performance.

Irving had a nice view while attending his first Nets home game this season, though still unable to play in New York. There is no longer a mandate that spectators are vaccinated against the coronavirus, but there is still one requiring it for someone who works there. Irving has not been vaccinated.

So the star guard had a seat in the stands, just as he did a night earlier to watch his college team, Duke, lose in the ACC championship game. He walked off arm-in-arm with Durant toward the Nets locker room after the game ended.

Andre Drummond had 18 points and 10 rebounds for the Nets,

Julius Randle scored 26 points for New York, and Evan Fournier had 25.

Mavericks 95, Celtics 92

In Boston, Luka Doncic returned from a hamstring scare to hit a tying 3-pointer with a 1:21 left, Spencer Dinwiddie made the winner with nine seconds to play and Dallas beat Boston to spoil Kevin Garnett's special day.

With Garnett courtside awaiting the postgame ceremony to retire his uniform No. 5, the Mavericks won for the seventh time in eight games and snapped Boston's five-game winning streak.

Doncic, who left in the first half rubbing his left leg, finished with 26 points and eight rebounds.

Boston's Jayson Tatum missed an off-balance 3-pointer at the buzzer. Tatum had 21 points and 11 rebounds, but made just a pair of baskets in the second half.

Hawks 131, Pacers 128

In Atlanta, Trae Young scored 33 of his 47 points in the first half and Atlanta beat Indiana Pacers 131-128 on Sunday night.

Danilo Gallinari and De'Andre Hunter had 15 points apiece for Atlanta, 10th in the Eastern Conference. The Hawks shot 54.8%.

The Hawks have won 13 of 15 at home and two straight overall. They had a season-high 77 points in the first half.

Tyrese Halliburton and Buddy Hield each scored 25 points for Indiana.

76ers 116, Magic 114, OT

In Orlando, Fla., Joel Embiid had 35 points and 16 rebounds and Philadelphia kept rallying, finally beating Orlando in overtime.

Down by 17 points in the first half and trailing by 10 in the fourth quarter, the Sixers were behind 113-109 with 1:25 left in OT.

James Harden hit one of two free throws with 6.7 seconds left in overtime to give Philadelphia a two-point lead. Cole Anthony missed a 3-pointer at the horn for Orlando.

Harden finished with 26 points and Tobias Harris added 25 for the 76ers. Wendell Carter Jr. led Orlando with 23 points and 12 rebounds.

Grizzlies 125, Thunder 118

In Oklahoma City, Desmond Bane scored 21 points and Memphis fended off a late push by Oklahoma City.

Jaren Jackson Jr. added 18 points and Ja Morant had 17 for the Grizzlies.

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander led the Thunder with 31 points and seven assists. Darius Bazley had a season-high 29 points and finished with 10 rebounds.

Clippers 106, Pistons 102

In Detroit, Marcus Morris scored 31 points and Luke Kennard had 16 against their former team, helping Los Angeles overcame an 18-point deficit to beat Detroit.

Reggie Jackson, another former Piston, had with 15 points, nine assists and eight rebounds.

Jeremi Grant scored 21 points for Detroit. Cade Cunningham had 19 points, 10 assists and nine rebounds.

Pelicans 130, Rockets 105

In New Orleans, Jonas Valanciunas had 32 points and 10 rebounds and New Orleans beat Houston to snap a four-game skid.

Jaxson Hayes added for 21 points for New Orleans.

Jalen Green led Houston with 17 points.

Tears, swears as Celtics retire Kevin Garnett's No. 5

BOSTON (AP)—With a couple of curses, a primal scream, and a few tears, too, Kevin Garnett helped hoist his No. 5 to the TD Garden rafters on Sunday alongside the 2008 NBA championship banner he helped win after arriving in Boston.

On a day that featured live and video tributes from ex-teammates, former Celtics greats, other NBA A-listers — and even musician Kenny G — Garnett became the 24th person in franchise history have is number retired.

None of the previous honorees them had quite the same combination of intensity, hard work and humor that Garnett brought when he joined Paul Pierce and Ray Allen for a New Big Three that ended the longest title drought in franchise history.

"Before he got here, we had one of our worst seasons. He was just that injection in the heart that we needed," Pierce, whose No. 34 was retired in 2018, said in the postgame ceremony. "You brought a sense of culture to this team that was desperately, desperately needed. You brought Boston pride — Celtic pride — back."

Wearing a dark suit and a black turtleneck, with a Ukrainian flag ribbon on his lapel and a Celtics green pocket square, Garnett came onto the court with his daughters and was greeted by former teammate and current broadcaster Brian Scalabrine.

With the championship trophy on a table behind them, Scalabrine asked where Garnett got the passion that propelled him from the fifth overall draft pick out of a Chicago high school to the basketball Hall of Fame.

"Nobody tells you how to use your superpower," Garnett said, adding that he watched his mother work hard to raise him. "It's in my DNA. I figured it out."

The day also included a reunion with Allen, ending a public feud that began when the sharpshooting guard left the Celtics to sign with the Miami Heat. The two players hugged and were soon joined by Pierce before Garnett shouted into the microphone: "Ray's next, damn it!"

AP

Kevin Garnett, stands in front of a replica of a banner featuring his No. 5 jersey during ceremonies to retire the number to the rafters following an NBA basketball game between the Dallas Mavericks and the Boston Celtics in Boston, Sunday, March 13, 2022.

Garnett played only six seasons in Boston, but they included five of his 15 career All-Star appearances and the 2008 championship — the 17th for the Celtics. He was the 2004 MVP with Minnesota, where he started and ended his 21-year NBA career.

"I'm glad to see you're a member of this elite club," Hall of Famer Bill Russell told him in a videotaped tribute. "I always enjoyed watching you play, and now our jerseys hang together in the rafters."

The Celtics presented Garnett with a piece of the original parquet floor, a custom bottle of tequila, a portrait of him popping his Celtics jersey, and "an NFT gift basket." His daughters joined him as he raised the banner to the rafters, tears streaming down his cheeks.

Other tributes came in from Kevin McHale, the Celtics Hall of Famer who was also the Timberwolves general manager who traded Garnett to Boston; the TNT broadcast crew, including Shaquille O'Neal and Charles Barkley; Danny Ainge, the general manager who built the '08 championship team; and former teammates Kendrick Perkins and Rajon Rondo. (Former Piston Isiah Thomas, who was in the crowd, was booed.)

"You changed the culture of the Boston Celtics. You taught us so much about what it takes to win," said ex-Celtics coach Doc Rivers, who is now coaching the Philadelphia 76ers. "Every coach in America — in the world — should have a chance to coach a Kevin Garnett, the greatest team player who ever played the game."

Kansas earns No. 1 seed in Midwest Region; Auburn gets No. 2

LAWRENCE, Kan. (AP)— Kansas fought its way through arguably the toughest league in college basketball this season, ultimately sharing the Big 12 regular-season title with Baylor before romping past Texas Tech to win the conference tournament.

Maybe it's karma that the Jayhawks could have the easiest path of a No. 1 seed to the Final Four.

They earned the top seed line for the 15th time on Sunday, second only to North Carolina for most in college hoops history, and Big 12 player of the year Ochai Agbaji and Co. will open the NCAA Tournament in the Midwest Region against the play-in winner between Texas Southern and Texas A&M-Corpus Christi in Fort Worth, Texas.

"I mean, being a 1-seed shows you've gone through the whole year, put in all the work, the grind it takes to be a 1-seed," Kansas forward Jalen Wilson said, "and now it's time to show it. It comes with the good and bad. Now you have everyone gunning for you. We're used to getting everyone's best shot anyway. Just have to represent it well."

Jayhawks coach Bill Self has a No. 1 seed for the 10th time, third-most in history, trailing only retiring Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski with 14 and former Kansas and North Carolina coach Roy Williams with 13.

"I never love our draw and I probably don't this year, either," Self said, "but I certainly don't hate it."

While the Jayhawks never reached the top spot in the Top 25 this season, their biggest roadblock to reaching New Orleans spent three weeks there. That would be second-seeded Auburn, the regular-season SEC champs, who will begin their quest for a second Final Four appearance four years against Jacksonville State in Greenville, South Carolina.

The Tigers were in line for a No. 1 seed for most of the season, but they took their lumps down the stretch, losing five of their last nine games to slip a line on the bracket. That included a quarterfinal loss to Texas A&M in the SEC tourney.

Other favorites to reach the Midwest Region semifinals in Chicago include No. 3 seed Wisconsin and fifth-seeded Iowa, which won its first Big Ten tourney title since 2006 with a victory over Purdue on Sunday; Big East regular-season champ Providence; and No. 6 seed LSU, which will play under interim coach Kevin Nickelberry after firing Will Wade over the weekend, one day after the Tigers were beaten by Arkansas in the quarterfinals SEC Tournament.

Allegations against Wade stem from a wide FBI investigation into coXrruption in college basketball that has implicated numerous major programs, including two others in the Midwest Region: Kansas and Auburn.

"Everyone is 0-0," Auburn guard Zep Jasper said. "We're going to play for our family, our fans, the community and just everyone. ... We're trying to get to NOLA. We're trying to get to the Final Four and maybe even a championship."

AP

Virginia Tech celebrates after winning the NCAA college basketball championship game against Duke in the Atlantic Coast Conference men's tournament, Saturday, March 12, 2022, in New York. Virginia Tech won, 82-67.

STAR SEARCH

The Midwest Region is loaded with big-name talent, starting with Auburn standout Jabari Smith, the likely No. 1 pick in the NBA Draft. The 6-foot-10 freshman is averaging about 17 points and nine rebounds a game.

Along with Smith and Agbaji there's Iowa standout Keegan Murray, the nation's fourth-leading scorer; Wisconsin shooting guard Johnny Davis, another likely lottery pick; and Auburn's Walker Kessler, who should be picked in the top 20.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Philadelphia	41	25	.621	—
Boston	41	28	.594	1½
Toronto	37	30	.552	4½
Brooklyn	35	33	.515	7
New York	28	40	.412	14

Southeast Division

Miami	45	24	.652	—
Atlanta	33	34	.493	11
Charlotte	33	35	.485	11½
Washington	29	37	.439	14½
Orlando	18	51	.261	27

Central Division

Milwaukee	42	26	.618	—
Chicago	41	26	.612	½
Cleveland	38	29	.567	3½
Indiana	23	46	.333	19½
Detroit	18	50	.265	24

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

Memphis	47	22	.681	—
Dallas	42	26	.618	4½
New Orleans	28	40	.412	18½
San Antonio	26	42	.382	20½
Houston	17	51	.250	29½

Northwest Division

Utah	42	25	.627	—
Denver	40	28	.588	2½
Minnesota	39	30	.565	4
Portland	26	40	.394	15½
Oklahoma City	20	47	.299	22

Pacific Division

x-Phoenix	54	14	.794	—
Golden State	46	22	.676	8
L.A. Clippers	36	34	.514	19
L.A. Lakers	29	38	.433	24½
Sacramento	24	45	.348	30½

x-clinched playoff spot

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

GECKOS

From Page 20

girls doubles and soccer even before that by topping Hong, 21-18, 21-13.

SIS then clinched the championship after Chavez teamed up with Matthew Berline in the mixed doubles and defeated Custodio and Ian Lubao, 21-13, 21-18.

The two wins posted by the Dolphins against the Geckos were courtesy of Lubao and Paulo Quidato, who beat Berline and Andy Kim in the boys doubles, 21-12, 21-15. Quidato then locked horns with Kim in the boys singles with the latter prevailing, 21-15, 20-21, 21-9.

SIS and Hopwood 1 split the first two matches in the middle school finals. John Riley and John Peter Quidato drew first blood after sweeping Frank Li and Jacky Lui, 11- 4, 11-7, in the boys doubles.

Luckily, Tsukagoshi, doing double duty in her true age category, and Julie Chavez leveled the match at 1-1 following a hard-earned 11-1, 2-11, 11-8 win in the girls doubles against Teresa Ahn and Shemaria Hicaro.

Tsukagoshi then saw action in the girls singles next and showed no signs of slowing down in beating Ahn, 11-9, 11-9.

SIS then rendered the mixed doubles a no-bearing contest when Lui upended Tyrone Rio-Magnipon in the boys singles, 11-5, 11-4, to win the middle school finals outright.

In the dead mixed doubles, Hopwood 1 salvaged a 7-11, 11-3, 11-4 victory when Ahn and Riley won over Chavez and Li.

The rest of the SIS middle school team includes Hunter Derocher, Jason Yu Michael Li, Brenden Derocher.

SIS high school and middle school badminton coach Fred Guintu said it was a mix of luck, skill, and hard work that both his Geckos teams somehow took home the twin championships.

"We practiced consistently and I limited my players to the minimum so they can enjoy the game. Also, me being a badminton player myself, I used my skills in teaching my players," he said.

On notable performances by his players, the SIS mathematics teacher gave kudos to Kim, Berline, Kaitlyn Chavez, and Tsukagoshi for playing their best against the No. 1 seed MHS 2 team. Ditto for his middle school squad who managed to slay a very good Hilitai team.

"This win is for our school, SIS. I also would like to extend our thanks to the Northern Marianas Badminton Association, especially Christy [Villaflor], Janel [Pangilinan], and president Merlie [Tolentino] as well as [Public School System Athletics Program director] Nick Gross for putting such an amazing tourney, the first-ever inter-school badminton tournament," he said.

BLUE

From Page 20

points, respectively.

In the last game of the masters triple-header, DECM Construction kept pace with Blue Haus by annihilating Eagle Construction, 89-50. "Smoking" Joe Tabora was unstoppable all game long and finished with a game-high 32 points, while Ariel Baul manned the paint and punished Eagle Construction for 17 points and countless rebounds.

The win improved DECM's slate to 3-2, while their opponents have yet to taste victory in three tries.

In the middle game of Saturday's schedule, NAPA Auto routed Magalahi Eagles although the score wasn't available as of press time. NAPA Auto is alone in second place in the standings at 4-1, while Magalahi Eagles kept their fellow birds of prey company at the cellar at 0-3.

Blue Haus 119 — J. Santos 30, Guiab 29, Diaz 24, Samson 7, Berline 6, Elchico 6, Buenabajo 4, E. Santos 4, Alano 1.

MDC 93 — Sedillo 36, Catalla 21, Tolentino 15, Moreno 8, Saplan 4, Villanın 4, Manipon 3, Dela Torre 2, Lumauag 2.

Scoring by quarters: 24-23, 42-51, 71-75, 119-93.

DECM 89 — Tabora 32, Baul 17, Jo. Gatdula 12, Moises 11, Joson 8, Ja. Gatdula 3, Tagle 3.

Eagle Construction 50 — L. Itaas 12, Ocampo 8, Alegre 7, Umali 4, Surima 4, Singca 4, Rabago 2.

Scoring by quarters: 23-15, 41-29, 69-40, 89-50.

COACHES

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a swim meet. Unfortunately, there is no competition pool on the island where a meet can be held. I hope that we can take the style of time trial this time and continue to set target/goal for children in the future."

For top performers in the mutual meet, Kimura named Maria Guerrero and Yutaro Kitagawa in the 10-and-under division and Sari Barman, Maria Batallones, Julia Jinang, and Isaiah Aleksenko in the 11-and-over category.

For SSC head coach Richard Sikkel, the mutual meet allowed his swimmers to set a benchmark to improve upon.

"For the older swimmers it is pretty evident that we are at a huge disadvantage by not having regular access to a pool. We had one pool practice before the trials. Their conditioning is great, but the confidence in their turns, their starts, etc. have tremendous room for improvement. We had several run-ins with the walls the last two days," he said.

Fortunately, Sikkel said with pool time he expects their times to improve by leaps and bounds, shaving off seconds instead of hundreds of seconds.

While SSC's more experienced swimmers struggled in the 25-yard pool at the Pacific Islands Club Saipan in San Antonio, the younger swimmers showed spunk, according to the SSC mentor.

"I was very impressed with our younger (10-and-under) swimmers who fought the first time trial jitters and swam good times considering that for most it was their first time."

Lastly, he thanked Kimura and Tsunami Saipan for taking the lead in organizing the first-ever mutual time trial between the two clubs.

"Coach Hiro and the volunteers did a great job organizing the trials and it was great to see such a large number of swimmers trying to set or raise their own bar."

MARK RABAGO

Micheal Miller of Saipan Swim Club, Kouki Watanabe of Tsunami Saipan Swimming Center, and Moshe Sikkel of SSC prepare to swim the 100-yard breaststroke during last week's mutual time trials at the Pacific Islands Club Saipan lap pool.

Tom Brady is returning to Tampa Bay

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Sports

Kansas earns No. 1 seed in Midwest Region; Auburn gets No. 2

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Geckos sweep interscholastic badminton league

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan International School's high school and middle school teams pose with coach Fred Guintu after winning the championships of both divisions of the TakeCare Interscholastic Badminton League last Saturday at the TSL Sports Complex in Gualo Rai.

MARK RABAGO

Lina Tsukagoshi pulled doubled duty by playing in both the high school and middle school divisions of last Saturday's TakeCare Interscholastic Badminton League.

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Saipan International School swept both the high school and middle school divisions of the TakeCare Interscholastic Badminton League last Saturday at the TSL Sports Complex in Gualo Rai.

What's most impressive was the Geckos completed the feat after turning back No. 1 seeds Marianas High School 1 in the high school division and Hopwood Middle School 1 in the middle school division.

In the high school match, the Geckos surprised the Dolphins, 3-2, by winning the girls doubles, girls singles, and mixed doubles.

Lina Tsukagoshi and Kaitlyn Chavez took care of business in the girls doubles by beating Seiyul Hong and Arisa Custodio, 21-19, 18-21, 21-16.

In the girls singles, Chavez shook off fatigue from playing

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Coaches on time trial: Benchmark has been set

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

The coaches of Tsunami Saipan Swimming Center and Saipan Swim Club agree that the first mutual time trial held last week between the two clubs has set a benchmark for their swimmers when they compete in future events.

"The practice itself can be done in the ocean or at the resort pool. However, it is difficult for children to stay motivated without the opportunity to time their swimming time at the swim meet," said Tsunami Saipan head coach Hiroyuki Kimura.

He added that like any other sport, practice is boring and painful and that's why a time trial is always a welcome respite to the monotony. "If practice was easy and fun, athletes or teams wouldn't evolve."

Kimura said a time trial is like a heightened version of the usual swimming practice and that's what he cherished finally conducting a mutual time trial with SSC.

"In swimming, it becomes fun for children when the time gets faster. But for that, you need to do practice. And in order to do the practice with high motivation, it is necessary to have a target constantly. The target should be

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Blue Haus, DECM prevail in masters caging

MARK RABAGO

DECM's Resty Joson bangs bodies with Eagle Construction's Alex Ocampo during their masters game in the Inaugural SCLC Basketball League last Saturday at the Gillette Multi-Purpose Gymnasium in Gualo Rai.

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Blue Haus exploded for 48 points in the fourth quarter to blow Marianas Dental Clinic, 119-92, out of the water in their masters duel in the Inaugural SCLC Basketball League last Saturday at the Gillette Multi-Purpose Gymnasium in Gualo Rai.

MDC surprisingly took the initiative early on and led 24-23 after the first quarter thanks to the three hits from the land of plenty by Rodney Catalla, who unofficially holds the Commonwealth record for most 3-pointers in a game at 20.

Blue Haus continued their lackadaisical play in the second canto. In contrast, MDC kept pouring it on with Raymond Tolentino matching Catalla's triples in the second and Fradel Sedillo slashing for 9 points as they grew their advantage to 51-42 at the break.

There was a bit of an uprising from the league-leaders in the third with Junar Guiab bullying his way for 11 markers. Despite missing their leader, Elmer Esdrelon, Blue Haus managed to just trail by 4 points, 71-75, going into the fourth and final quarter.

That's when all hell broke loose with former national players John Santos and Tony Diaz making it rain from rainbow territory. In a flash, MDC's lead was gone and Blue Haus was in complete control of the ballgame to win its fourth game in as many outings.

Santos and Diaz combined for 30 of the team's 48 points in the payoff period with Guiab tossing in 11 more markers for good measure. Santos, Guiab, and Diaz scored 30, 29, and 24 points in the win, while Sedillo and Catalla paced MDC in the loss—its third and four games—with 36 and 21

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